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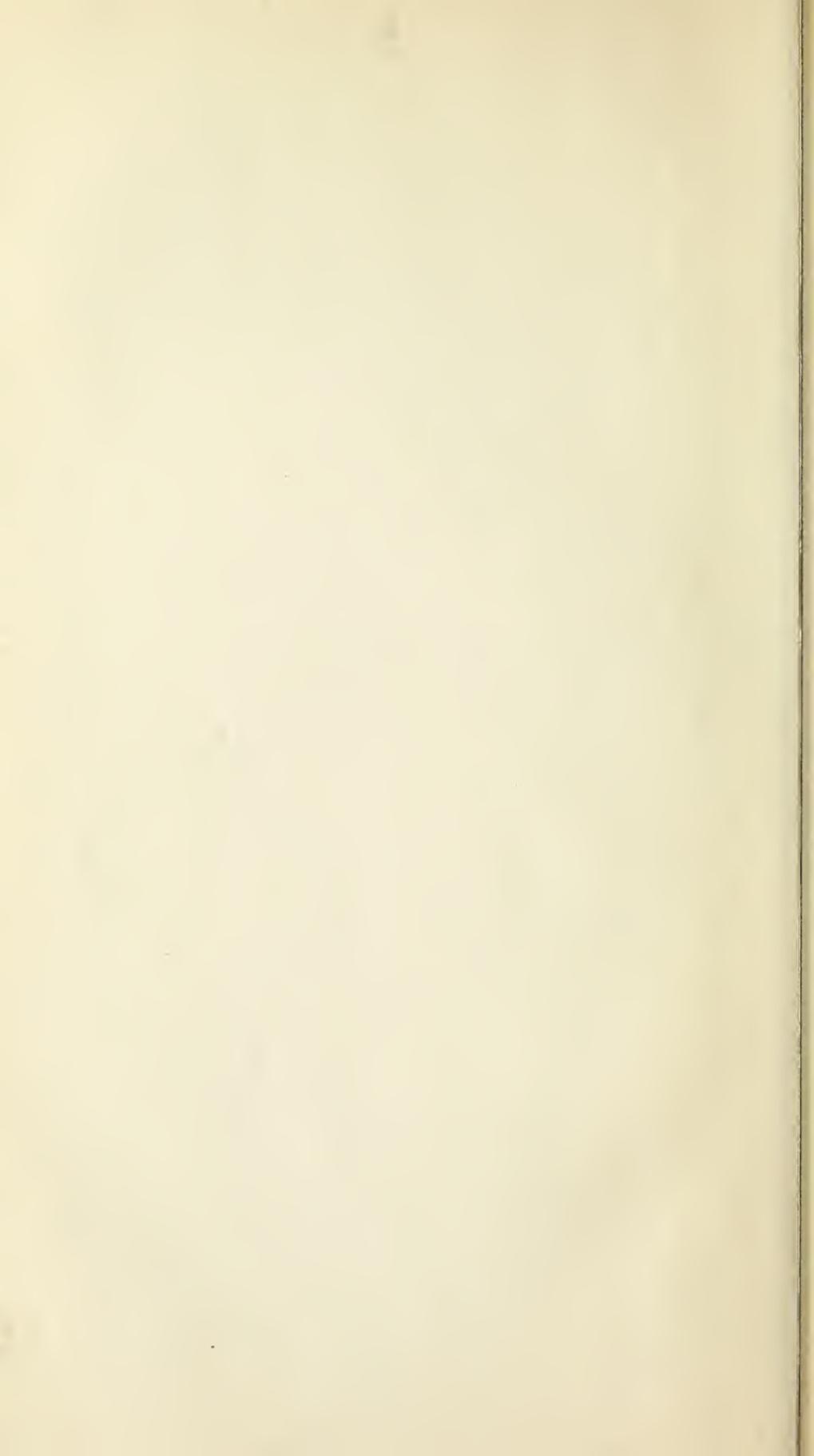


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# NORTH PROVIDENCE CENTENNIAL.

R. S.

A

## REPORT OF THE CELEBRATION

AT

PAWTUCKET, NORTH PROVIDENCE,

OF THE

## ONE HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY

OF THE

INCORPORATION OF THE TOWN,

June 24th, 1865.

WITH AN ADDRESS,

CONTAINING

HISTORICAL MATTERS OF LOCAL INTEREST.

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PRINTED AND PUBLISHED

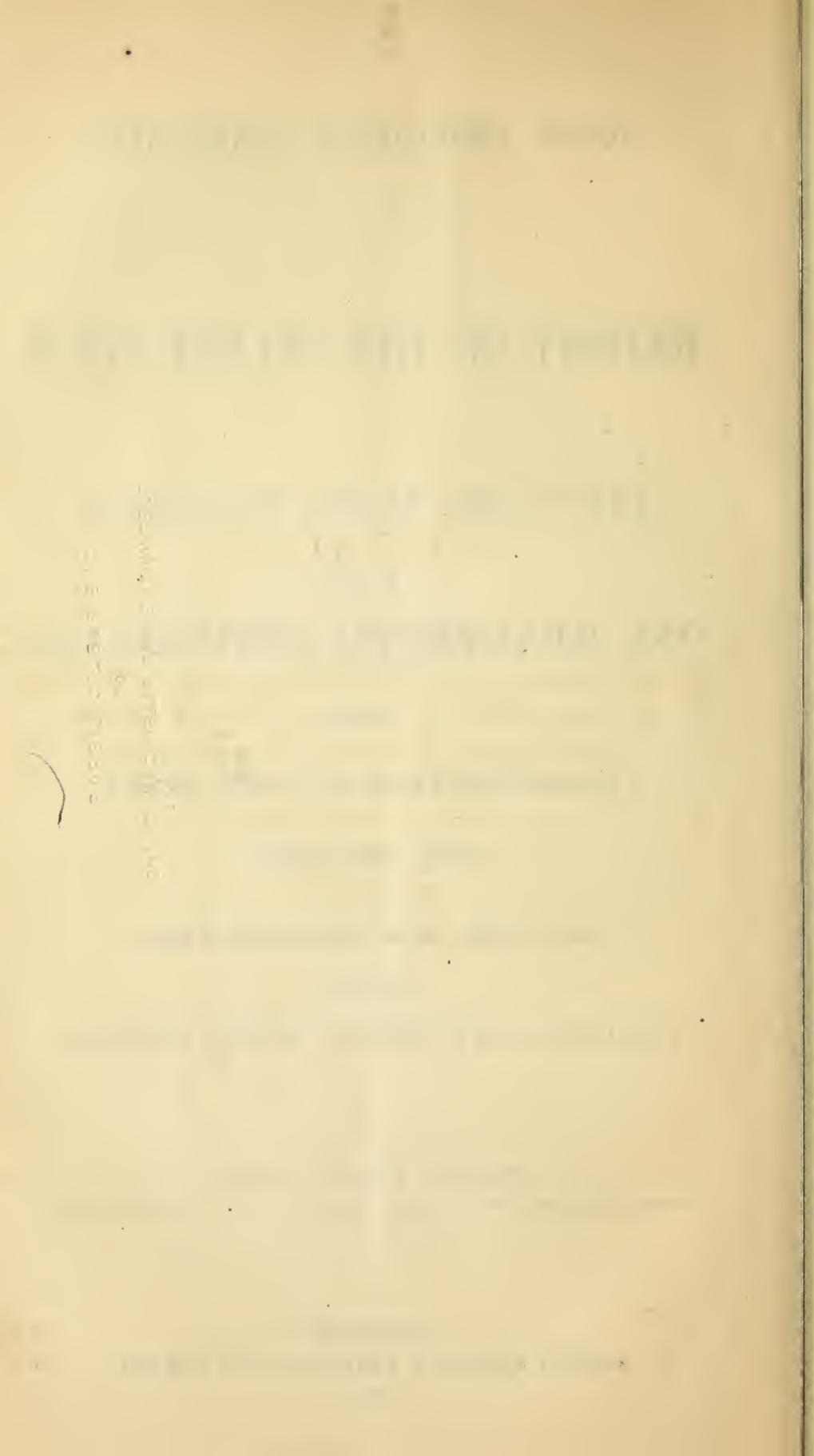
UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE COMMITTEE OF ARRANGEMENTS.

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PAWTUCKET:

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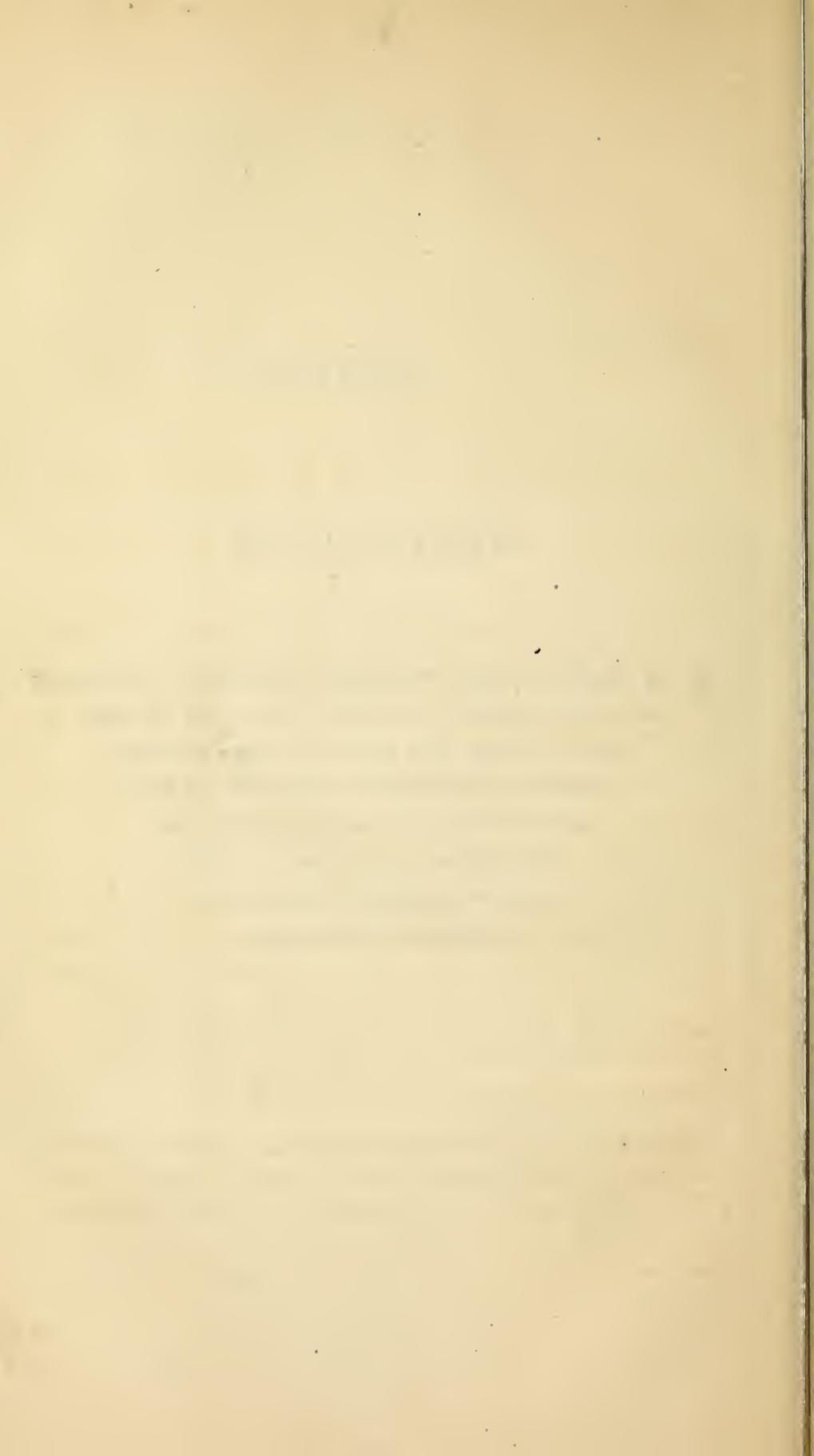


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## DEDICATION.

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TO THE CITIZENS OF NORTH PROVIDENCE; ESPECIALLY TO THE NATIVES  
AND OLDER RESIDENTS OF THIS TOWN, WHO HAVE WELCOMED  
TALENT AND SKILL FROM ABROAD, AND HAVE NURTURED  
INDUSTRY AND ENTERPRISE AT HOME; AND TO THE  
ABSENT SONS OF THIS TOWN, WHO STILL LOVE  
THE PLACE OF THEIR BIRTH, AND PRAY  
FOR ITS PROSPERITY, THIS BOOK IS  
RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED.



## ACTION IN TOWN MEETING.

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NORTH PROVIDENCE, *September 26, 1864.*

*R. James*  
Lyson - \$2.00

IN Town Meeting legally called, the following Preamble and Resolutions were presented by Edward S. Wilkinson, Esq., and unanimously adopted :

*Whereas*, in the month of June, A. D. 1865, will be the One Hundredth Anniversary of the incorporation of the town by the General Assembly ; Therefore,

*Resolved*, That a Committee of nine be appointed for the purpose of making such arrangements as they may deem expedient for the proper celebration of the Centennial Anniversary of the incorporation of this town, and that said Committee be authorized to draw on the Town Treasurer for any expense that may be incurred in such celebration, provided the amount does not exceed the sum of one thousand dollars.

*Resolved*, That Daniel Wilkinson, Charles S. Bradley, Henry Armington, Olney Arnold, Hiram H. Thomas, Obadiah Brown, William F. Sayles, Lewis Fairbrother, and Amasa M. Eaton, compose said Committee, and that they be authorized to fill any vacancies that may occur in their own numbers.

# TRANSACTIONS

OF THE

## COMMITTEE OF ARRANGEMENTS.

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IN April, 1865, the Committee met, and organized by choosing Daniel Wilkinson, Chairman, and Amasa M. Eaton, Secretary.

After a free interchange of opinion between several of the Committee as to what kind of a celebration to get up, it was

*Voted*, That Daniel Wilkinson, Henry Armington and Amasa M. Eaton be a sub-Committee to make all the necessary arrangements for getting up a celebration worthy of the occasion.

The Committee extended an invitation to the Rev. Massena Goodrich, Pastor of the Mill Street Universalist Society of Pawtucket, to deliver an Address, which he kindly accepted.

All the preliminary arrangements having been made, Saturday, June 24th, 1865, was fixed upon as the day for the celebration.

# THE CELEBRATION.

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AT 10 o'clock on the morning of Saturday, June 24th, 1865, the procession commenced forming on Summer street, and all things being in readiness, moved in the following order:

## THE PROCESSION.

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*Chief Marshal*—WILLIAM R. WALKER, Esq.

*Aids*—Col. Stephen R. Bucklin, Capt. Christopher Duckworth, and  
Joseph F. Brown, Esq.

American Brass Band, 24 pieces.

Company H, Pawtucket Light Guard, Capt. Crocker.

Returned Veterans of the town of North Providence, in uniform.

Drum Band.

Rhode Island Engine Company No. 1, Capt. Jenks.

Monitor Steam Fire Engine Company, Capt. McQuistion.

Rough and Ready Engine Company No. 2, Capt. Collyer.

Fairmount Engine Company No. 3, Capt. Bennett.

Committee of Arrangements.

Orator of the day and Officiating Clergyman.

Clergymen of the town.

Town Officers.

Firewards and Presidents of Firewards.

State Officers.

Members of the General Assembly.

Invited Guests.

Carriage containing 36 young ladies, representing the 36 States,  
under the direction of Capt. C. Duckworth.

Citizens of the town and vicinity.

The procession marched through North Union to Main street, down Main to Pleasant, down Pleasant to Jenks, up Jenks, through Cedar to George street, through George to Common, up Common to Main street, down Main street, over the Bridge, up Main street to Walcott, down Walcott street to Front, through Front street and over the Bridge, up Mill street to Exchange, up Exchange street to High, through High street to the First Baptist Church.

## EXERCISES AT THE CHURCH.

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ARRIVING at the Church, the Assembly was called to order by the Hon. CHARLES S. BRADLEY, President of the day.

The exercises commenced by the singing of the following

MOTETT—"Praise the Lord,"

by a select choir, under the direction of PARDON E. TILLINGHAST, Esq.

Then followed an original hymn, written for the occasion by JAMES WOOD, Esq.:

To-day we stand on holy ground,  
Whence ceaseless comforts flow,  
Where all was one wide wilderness  
A hundred years ago.

Our fathers, nerved with manly strength,  
Broke up the rugged sod;  
Not in their strength alone they toiled,  
But put their trust in God.

He crown'd their labors with success,  
And soon the barren wild  
Became a second paradise;—  
Another Eden smiled.

A kindred people join'd as one,  
With hearts and feelings warm,  
And industry and thrift built up  
The cottage and the farm.

The church and school-house rose to view,  
To teach, and preach His word,  
Till all the place was dotted o'er  
With temples to the Lord.

Here art and science found their place,  
Built reservoir and flume,  
The potent power of steam propell'd  
The spindle and the loom.

In kindred works from year to year  
Our sires did thus engage,  
Then left to us a pleasant place  
And goodly heritage.

Let us, their children, live like them,  
In faith, and works, and prayers,  
So we may leave to future times  
A record bright as theirs.

Prayer was offered by Rev. CHARLES E. SMITH, Pastor of the First Baptist Church, as follows:

Almighty God, Thou Ruler of nations; we thank Thee for the blessings of one hundred years. We thank Thee that by Thy providential

appointment our lot has been cast on this western continent, far from the tyranny of despots and the injustice of the old world. We thank Thee that from our infancy we have known only the benign influences of free institutions ; that it has been ours to enjoy the fostering care and the ennobling power of an enlightened christian civilization. We thank Thee that of all places upon the earth, the lines have fallen to us in our beloved New England. We thank Thee for the intelligence, and highmindedness, and piety of our forefathers ; that the beginning of our history was due, not to the promptings of the spirit of gain, but to the impulses of conscience. We thank Thee that the experiment of free government has been so successfully tried, and that after a century of local, municipal rule it has not been found wanting ; at least, so far as the great essentials to human happiness and prosperity are concerned. We thank Thee that this centennial anniversary finds us in common with all our nation once more in the possession of that peace of which for four terrible years we have been bereft, and in possession of such surprising and excellent results as abundantly compensate us for the expenditure of blood and treasure, and will be a priceless heritage to coming generations. We thank Thee for an emancipated land ; for a government strong to protect us against foreign foes and domestic insurgents. And now that we bring our thank-offerings into Thy presence, humbly imploring the forgiveness of our sins, and acknowledging our own demerit, we urge in the name of Christ these petitions : We entreat the continuance of the favor of our fathers' God to their children to the latest generations. We ask Thee that when another century shall have taken its flight, the blessings to be commemorated shall be no less than those we call to mind to-day. We ask Thee that this soil, sacred indeed to us by its associations with the excellent who have passed away, may continue the home of freedom, intelligence, virtue, and religion. We ask Thee that the Great Republic of which this town and State are constituent parts, may advance under the guidance of Jehovah to that unexampled pre-eminence among the nations which our hearts already so fondly foretell. We pray that religious liberty, which first found a civil home within our own State, but now reigns through our land, may never be succeeded by religious persecutions, that our country may continue the home of the exile, and the refuge of the oppressed. Let justice be done through all our borders, let vice be outlawed by the general virtue of the people, let religion be respected, protected, and exert its legitimate influence through our land. And now praying for Thy blessing upon all who are in authority, whether in the General Government, the State, or our town corporation, beseeching Thee to direct in wisdom the issue of those

important political questions which just now agitate the public mind, we entreat Thee to add Thy blessing to the present occasion, making the words of him who shall address us, together with all the exercises of the hour, minister to our profit, and to Thy glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Then followed another original hymn, written for the occasion by JAMES WOOD, Esq.:

To God—our fathers' God—we raise  
The tribute of our heartfelt praise;  
Through endless ages still the same,  
We bless and magnify Thy name.

We thank Thee that Thy own right hand  
Hath saved and sanctified our land,  
Where God-crowned liberty alone  
Shall hold dominion on her throne.

We bless Thee for the grace that comes  
To grateful hearts and happy homes,  
To teach our souls to feel and know  
The source from whence these blessings flow.

Let greater love each bosom swell,  
Than pen can write or tongue can tell,  
Till each and all around shall be,  
As near as mortals may,—like Thee.

So when we leave these earthly scenes,  
To pass the gulf that intervenes,  
A Saviour's arms shall bear us o'er,  
And land us safe on Canaan's shore.

After which, the President of the day introduced to the audience the Rev. MASSENA GOODRICH, who delivered the following interesting and historical Centennial Address.

## INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

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GRATITUDE and propriety demand that I acknowledge my indebtedness to some of my fellow-citizens for information supplied. I forbear to mention the books which I have consulted, as they are public property. I name simply those persons from whom I have received oral information. To Rev. Dr. Benedict, to E. S. Wilkinson, Esq., to Capt. N. G. B. Dexter, Stephen Randall, Esq., Lemuel Angell, Esq., Francis H. Shepard, Esq., and to Daniel Wilkinson, Esq., I return my thanks. I must add to these names, those of Capt. James S. Brown, of Pawtucket, and Mr. Samuel Greene, of Woonsocket. If this address has any merit, it is largely attributable to the information given, and services rendered by the gentlemen above named.

M. G.

## CENTENNIAL ADDRESS.

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It is interesting in treating of the history of a town or State, to trace it from its feeble beginning through its various stages of growth. It is pleasing to be able to answer the questions, Who felled the first trees of the primeval forests within its borders? Whose plowshare turned the first furrow? Whose hoe broke the first sod? Whose cabin sheltered the first residents? These are questions, fellow-citizens, that cannot be answered with regard to our town. It had no independent existence till a century ago. It commenced its race, not a blushing maiden, but the mother of an already large family. Its early history is therefore connected with that of Providence. Several of the most thriving towns of our State can say, *Providence is the mother of us all.*

A word on this point, however, may not be out of place. The settlement of Providence was probably begun two hundred and twenty-nine years ago this very month. Its territory was then very extensive. In the year 1731, however, its boundaries were materially curtailed. Smithfield, Scituate, and Gloucester, were cut off, and incorporated as independent towns. In 1754, its area was diminished still more; Cranston was incorporated. In 1759, the town of Johnston was established. And lastly our own town was cut off; and then the territory of our common mother was left in peace.

The petition for the severing of our own town from Providence was presented to the General Assembly at the February session in 1765. Action was, however, deferred to the next session in June. At that time an act was passed granting the

prayer of the petitioners, save in respect to the name. They had desired that the new town be called Wenscutt. The Assembly decreed, however, that the name should be North Providence. The grounds on which the petitioners based their request, are stated in the preamble of the act of incorporation. I quote from that document :

“ Whereas, a large number of the inhabitants of the northern part of the town of Providence, preferred a petition, and represented to this Assembly, that there are within the limits of said township, upwards of four hundred freemen; that those who dwell in the most compact part, are altogether merchants and tradesmen; and that far the greater part of the petitioners dwell in the more remote part of said township, and are near all farmers, whose interest and business differ from the merchants; that town meetings have been often called and held in the compact part, upon matters and things which did not, and do not, concern the farmers in the northern and more remote parts of said town; that they, the petitioners, nevertheless, have been, and still are, obliged to leave farming business, and to attend upon said meetings, to prevent things being voted to their disadvantage, which hath occasioned much loss of time, contention, and expense, which ought to be borne by the merchants and tradesmen; all which, being very inconvenient, they prayed to be set off, erected, and made into a township,” &c.

After this preamble the Assembly proceed to enact that the town of Providence be divided, and they designate the boundaries.

There appear to have been one hundred and fifteen petitioners to the original prayer, and they represent that out of the four hundred freemen of the town, about one hundred and sixty reside in the part proposed to be set off. The act of the Assembly led, however, to no little crimination and strife. The boundary line, instead of being so run as to separate the farming section of the town from the more compact portion, threw quite a strip of the latter part into the new township; and cool historians, who cannot participate in the fierce personal or political controversies of a hundred years ago, have been constrained to conclude that the ostensible reason for dividing Providence was not the sole reason. A bitter feud then existed between Governors Ward and Hopkins; and it is supposed that the main design in establishing a new town at that particular

time, and of throwing into it a part of the compactly settled portion of Providence, was to secure the election of representatives to the General Assembly favorable to Gov. Ward. You will pardon me, however, who am not "a native to the manor born," for confessing my ignorance of the special points at issue between those eminent men. Let the dead bury their dead. I only remark that two years after, when Gov. Hopkins secured the ascendancy in the colony, the southern bounds of North Providence were established as they now exist.

The act further provided that the town of North Providence should be represented by two deputies in the General Assembly. All the justices of the peace, and military officers, previously chosen or appointed for the town of Providence, who lived in the town now made North Providence, were empowered to retain as full power and authority as they had previously possessed ; and John Olney, Esq., was authorized to issue a warrant, and call the freemen of the new town to meet together, "at the house of Capt. Thomas Olney, within the same, on or before the 8th day of July, in order to choose and appoint all officers necessary for managing and conducting the prudential affairs of said town, agreeably to the laws of this colony."

From this brief survey, fellow-citizens, you perceive that many interesting matters are left subjects of conjecture. It is highly probable that some part of the territory of our town was occupied shortly after the settlement of Providence. The hardy pioneer seeking a new home, avails himself of every natural advantage ; and as our town is pierced by two or three streams, there is no doubt that settlers soon ascended the Pawtucket as far as the falls, and the Woonasquatucket. Indeed, some well known facts show this to have been the case with regard to the former river. Tradition represents that Joseph Jenks came to the neighborhood of Pawtucket falls about the year 1655. He was a native of England, and followed, when a young man, his father to our continent. The senior Jenks had settled in Lynn, Mass., and engaged in the business of manufacturing iron. The younger Jenks, having come to Lynn, found, as tradition represents, that the rapid increase of population was using up wood so fast, that, ere long, there would be an insufficiency for the

supply of coal. And as charcoal was the sole means of heating the forges, a failure of forest trees would be a serious drawback. As the forests were doubtless here standing in their native luxuriance, the shores of the Pawtucket invited the coming of Mr. Jenks. His first purchase of land is supposed to have been of a family named Mowry; but an authentic document has been quoted by Dr. Benedict, in the form of a deed from Abel Potter, of Moshanticut, conveying "sixty acres of land, more or less, which was formerly laid out to my wife Rachel's grandfather, Mr. Ezekiel Holliman, lying near Pawtucket falls, together with a commonage, the said threescore lot and commonage having been bequeathed to my wife Rachel Potter, formerly called Rachel Warner." This deed was dated October 10th, 1671. Over a century, therefore, before the incorporation of our town, Joseph Jenks was within its limits, engaged in some branch of iron manufacturing.

Time forbids my dealing largely, in such an address as this, with the history of any single families. It is not improper, however, to remind you, fellow-citizens, that Ezekiel Holliman was one of the twelve who constituted the first Baptist church in Rhode Island. Joseph Jenks was the father of several men who became eminent in the business and political affairs of the infant colony. The title of Assistant, answering to Lieutenant Governor now, is always added in old writings to the name of the father; and of his four sons, Joseph was governor of Rhode Island from 1727 to 1732; Nathaniel had the title of major; Ebenezer was a minister; and William a judge. Every one of these sons built frame houses, which long stood as landmarks in the village of Pawtucket, North Providence.\* The old stone

\* A word as to the original use of the word *Pawtucket* may remove ambiguity. The term *Pawtucket* is said to signify *falls of water*. When applied to the adjoining tract of land, it signified in the outset what has since been called the village of Pawtucket, North Providence. When the name was originally given, the territory east of the river formed a part of the town of Rehoboth, Mass. This town was subsequently divided into three townships,—Rehoboth, Seekonk, and Pawtucket. While the last-named town remained in Massachusetts, it was easy to distinguish between Pawtucket, Mass., and Pawtucket, R. I. Four or five years ago, however, on an exchange of territory's being made, Pawtucket, Mass., became the town of Pawtucket, R. I.; so that our State now has the town of Pawtucket, and a village of Pawtucket. The latter lies in the township of North Providence, and is always referred to when Pawtucket is named in earlier histories, or in this address.

chimney house on Mill street was enlarged by the addition to it of a part of the house in which the senior Joseph Jenks once resided. Old residents aver that, in their boyhood, they read on that chimney the figures 168-, the last figure being illegible. Dr. C. F. Manchester occupies the house once the mansion of Gov. Jenks. I see, however, by Gov. Arnold's history that it was deemed "highly necessary for the governor of this colony to live at Newport, the metropolis of the government;" and an appropriation was made of one hundred pounds to defray the expenses of Gov. Jenks's removal. As our town was then a part of Providence, this was doubtless intended as a gentle reminder to Providence, that, even if she had a citizen of hers chosen governor, she must recollect her inferiority to Newport.

But I pass rapidly over other matters connected with the early history of what afterwards became North Providence, till I come to speak specially of the industrial history of our town. Old chronicles inform us that in the year 1676 a Capt. Pierse, with fifty English and a like number of friendly Indians, was slain, and his whole force put to death, near Pawtucket falls, by a band of hostile Indians. This happened March 26th, and three days after, the north part of Providence was destroyed by the Indians. As the foundation walls of the houses were visible years ago near Harrington's lane, the presumption is that a part of the settlers were living in what is now our own town. Indeed, according to Dr. Benedict's reminiscences, the old forge erected by the elder Jenks was burnt by the Indians, during King Philip's war, about the year 1676.

As I shall treat, however, in the sequel of several other interesting matters connected with the history of our town while forming a part of Providence, I pass over the ninety years intervening between the last date mentioned and the time of incorporating our town, by remarking that the enterprising habits of the Jenkses drew around them and their successors many an artisan. As what is now the city of Providence became more thickly settled, the outlying portions were brought under cultivation. Trees were felled, the ground broken up, cabins and houses were reared, and the hills were covered with flocks, and the valleys with corn; so that, when the act of incorporation

was passed, North Providence contained a number of freemen two-thirds as great as those who remained in the mother town. By examining a census of the colony of Rhode Island in the year 1774,—nine years after the incorporation of our town,—I find that the whole number of families in the colony was 9,450. Of the inhabitants, there were of whites 54,460; of Indians 1,479; of blacks, 3,668; making a total of 59,607. At that period the population of North Providence consisted of 138 families. Of the population, there were of whites 792; of Indians 7; of blacks 31; making a total of 830. Of the heads of families 132 were males, 6 females. It may not be uninteresting to note here that the population of our town by the last census, taken five years ago, was 11,820 souls. In eighty-six years therefore it had increased more than fourteen fold.

And here, fellow-citizens, I may pause one moment to note the special character of the early New England towns. A good historian, in speaking of the Roman empire, remarks that there were, properly speaking, "no country places, no villages. At least, the country was nothing like what it is in the present day. It was cultivated, no doubt, but it was not peopled. The proprietors of lands dwelt in cities; they left these occasionally to visit their rural property, where they usually kept a certain number of slaves; but that which we now call the country, that scattered population, sometimes in lone houses, sometimes in hamlets and villages, was altogether unknown in ancient Italy. 'Twas with cities that Rome fought, with cities that she made compacts, and into cities that she sent colonies." In distinction from this, our New England population was largely distributed in little country villages, every one of them a miniature democracy. But unlike the towns of Greece, there was from the beginning a tendency to union. In Greece every city was autonomous. It claimed the extreme of individuality and isolation. The most threatening dangers could hardly drive the cities of that land to united effort. Among our New England towns, on the contrary, while from the first local needs were provided for, local rights, in minor things, watched over, there was a recollection of the fact that every little hamlet in every colony, was but a member of a larger body. The tendency

was, in fine, not to selfish isolation, but to nationality. And if resentment against real or fancied wrongs, committed by the stronger colonies against their feebler neighbors, had tended to repulsion, the perils to which our ancestors were exposed urged to union. Our fathers gloried in their English descent. They were not ready to be absorbed by the French colonies. Constant perils threatened from the Indians and the French. Every town felt therefore the need of sympathy and help. Every colony had at times to seek the assistance of its neighbors. By consequence, while our country villages grew up democratic in tendency, and exercising in many respects a manly self-reliance, they yet clung closely to the large towns for protection or aid.

The preamble to the act of incorporation, which I have already quoted, shows that the majority of the inhabitants of our town a century ago were tillers of the soil. But our territory is not extensive enough, nor is our soil sufficiently rich, to have sustained a large population. North Providence would hardly have quadrupled her population in eighty-six years, had she depended on agriculture alone. The explanation of the large growth of our town is found in the establishment of manufacturing within our borders. I propose now, therefore, to give a brief sketch of the early attempts in that department.

I have already mentioned the arrival of Joseph Jenks here upwards of two centuries ago. A man so energetic and enterprising as he, would not be slow to use the power which the falls of Pawtucket supply. In a case brought before the Circuit Court nearly forty years ago, Judge Story, in giving his decision, rehearsed certain facts that had been established in the trial. Speaking of the dams on the Pawtucket river, he says :

"The lower dam was built as early as the year 1718, by the proprietors on both sides of the river, and is indispensable for the use of these mills respectively. There was previously an old dam on the western side extending about three-quarters of the way across the river, and a separate dam for a saw mill on the east side. The lower dam was a substitute for both. About the year 1714, a canal was dug, or an old channel widened and cleared on the western side of the river; beginning at the river a few rods above the lower dam, and running round the west end thereof until it emptied into the river, about ten rods below the same dam. It has been long known by the name of Sergeant's Trench, and was originally cut for

the passage of fish up and down the river. But having wholly failed for this purpose, about the year 1730, an anchor mill and dam were built across it by the then proprietors of the land; and between that period and the year 1790, several other dams and mills were built over the same, and since that period more expensive mills have been built there. In 1792 another dam was built across the river at a place above the head of the trench, and almost twenty rods above the lower dam; and the mills on the upper dam, as well as those on Sergeant's Trench, are now supplied with water by proper flumes, &c., from the pond formed by the upper dam."

I forbear to quote farther from the opinion of Judge Story, fellow-citizens. Enough that I remind you that the trial just referred to showed that early in the last century, perhaps indeed during the previous century, dams had been built at the Pawtucket falls. Already the buzzing of machinery, the roar of hammers, and the stir of men, prophesied of the business that should make this region an important manufacturing center, within a century or more. But it is amusing, not to say mortifying, to see how slow hundreds are to discern the sources of their thrift. The falls at Pawtucket, and the dams that had been built, were alike voted a nuisance by scores of the dwellers by the Blackstone.\* Those obstructions hindered the free migration of shad and alewives to what is now Woonsocket. Accordingly the General Assembly, in 1761, authorized a lottery to raise fifteen hundred pounds, old tenor, for the purpose of making a passage around Pawtucket falls, "so that fish of almost every kind, who choose fresh water at certain seasons of the year, may pass with ease." Of course this legislation was proper enough, bating the lottery; but twelve years later the General Assembly went a step farther, and passed an act making it lawful for any one to break down or blow up the

\* The Blackstone river rises in Massachusetts, north of Worcester. It takes its name from William Blackstone, the first permanent settler of our little State. He was a clergyman of the church of England, but early left his native land on account of non-conformity. He was the first English resident of Boston, the early settlers of Charlestown finding him already occupying the peninsula. After residing there a few years, he came down to this region, and settled in what is now Cumberland, R. I. The reason of his seeking a home for the second time in the wilderness, is quaintly stated by himself: "I left England to get from under the power of the lord bishops, but in America I am fallen under the power of the lord brethren." The river from its source to the Pawtucket falls bears the name of the Blackstone. Below the falls it receives the name of the Pawtucket.

rocks at Pawtucket falls, to "let fish pass up;" and "the said river" was "declared a public river." Had the men who petitioned for such an act, but possessed power proportioned to their wishes, shad might have freely spawned at Woonsocket, but Samuel Slater had probably never turned his steps toward our town.

The enterprising family of whom I have already spoken continued to carry on the iron business in its various branches. The descendants for generations of these men trod in the footsteps of their ancestors. Muskets were manufactured for several of the militia companies of the colony as early as 1775, by Stephen Jenks\* of this town. Indeed, the iron business made Pawtucket famous in a wide circuit. This was the principal workshop of Providence for anchors, screws, and other heavy articles, that needed a water power and trip-hammers, which were lacking in the mother town. Among the men who came to increase the activity of North Providence was Oziel Wilkinson. He had resided for years in Smithfield, and done a great deal of work for the merchants of Providence. Obtaining his stock largely from that town, it seemed more convenient to transfer his business to the neighborhood of Pawtucket falls; but as the British long held possession of the southern part of the State, and the capture of Providence seemed not unlikely, his custom-

\* Through the kindness of Gen. Olney Arnold, the present treasurer of our town, I have been permitted to examine the early treasurers' books. I find that one of those officers occasionally makes a memorandum on his pages. I copy the following obituary:

"Died at Pawtucket, in North Providence, on Sunday, Nov. 16th, A. D. 1800, Capt. Stephen Jenks, in the 74th year of his age. He was descended from a long line of respectable ancestors, and has left a disconsolate widow, and 60 descendants to the fourth generation. He was a kind husband, an indulgent parent, and an obliging neighbour. The widow, the orphan, and others in distress, were partakers of his benevolence. He was a man of sound judgment and integrity, and had been a member of the General Assembly many years. He was a zealous patriot of 1775, and impartially presided at most of the public business of his town. During his last sickness he was exceedingly calm, and perfectly resigned to the will of God. His remains were attended to the meeting house on Tuesday, where a pertinent discourse was delivered by the Rev. Mr. Hurley, of Cambridge. After which they were decently interred."

I have also been permitted to read two or three manuscript letters of Capt. Jenks's, written in 1799, giving an extended genealogy of his family. From him comes the tradition of his ancestor's coming hither in 1655.

ers advised him not to remove, lest his shops be destroyed by some marauding party. With the coming of peace, however, all danger seemed dispelled, and Mr. Wilkinson removed to this place. Mr. W. had five sons, all blacksmiths, and father and sons with characteristic energy enlarged the business of the town. They speedily availed themselves of a part of the water power, commenced making anchors, and extended their operations to other departments. At a very early date the senior Wilkinson manufactured cut nails; and is supposed to have been the first manufacturer of those useful articles in any land.

For a period Daniel Wilkinson was foreman of his father's shop, and years afterwards he and his brother David Wilkinson begun an independent establishment. All the younger Wilkinsons, indeed, were like their father, men of energy and business capacity. One of them in a few years turned his steps to Connecticut, and won eminence and thrift there. The other four long continued to promote the prosperity of the town of their adoption. Abraham and Isaac Wilkinson formed one firm, David and Daniel another, and largely expanded the business of manufacturing iron. Here screws were made, and for years the heavy oil presses of Nantucket and New Bedford were principally supplied from the shops of the Wilkinsons. Here in 1794 was cast the iron for the draw of the Cambridge bridge; here were made the patterns, here cast the wheels for the first canal of the country. Of the younger Wilkinsons, David had rare inventive genius. His was one of those minds fertile in expedients, and teeming with contrivances to abridge toil, and give man larger control over the material world. I have read one of his letters published in the Transactions of the Rhode Island Society for the Encouragement of Domestic Industry; and could not but notice the truth of the poet's saying, "the child is father to the man." In speaking of a new screw machine which he had invented as early as 1794, he describes it as on the principle of the guage or sliding lathe, "the perfection of which," says he, "consists in that most faithful agent *gravity*, making the joint, and that almighty perfect number *three*, which is harmony itself. I was young when I learnt that principle. I had never seen my grandmother putting a chip under a three-

legged milking stool ; but she always had to put a chip under a four-legged table to keep it steady. I cut screws of all dimensions by this machine, and did them perfectly.” A great many other lads had doubtless seen their mothers or grandmothers use a three-legged stool, but how few had noticed the steadiness, or the great mechanical invention based on the firmness of the tripod ! But I shall have occasion again to refer to the inventive skill of David Wilkinson.

I have slightly disregarded chronological order, but it is proper now to speak of the successful establishment of cotton manufacturing in this town. The early history of attempts to spin cotton by water power in our land may be briefly told. Our country had passed through the Revolutionary war, and emerged from it fettered by debt. Importations from foreign countries threatened to impoverish us still more, and thoughtful capitalists and skillful mechanics were trying to relieve us from the necessity of dependence on foreign looms. In Worcester and Beverly, in Massachusetts, in Providence and other places, in our State, experiments were making prior to 1790, to solve the problem whether we could spin in America the cotton needed for our own use. Moses Brown, of Providence, had purchased a spinning frame, with which others had failed to succeed, and removed it with certain other machines to this place, and attached them to a water-wheel. In vain, however. Success seemed as unlikely by the falls of the Pawtucket as elsewhere. At this juncture, near the close of the year 1789, Samuel Slater, a young English artisan, arrived in New York. He had been induced to leave his native land by seeing in the newspapers what bounties were giving, what encouragements were proffered, particularly in Pennsylvania, for machines for manufacturing cotton. He left England, however, by stealth. From the very settlement of our country, there had been a jealousy on the part of English manufacturers against every attempt of the colonists to provide for anything but their simplest wants. Statesmen were willing, nay, desirous, that the colonies should furnish the raw materials for the use of the artisan in the fatherland ; for that would relieve Great Britain of dependence on foreign countries ; but tolerated nothing further. Parliament was constantly

seeking to repress every branch of industry that might make the colonists rivals of their trans-atlantic fellow-subjects. The war of the Revolution severed the political dependence of the colonies on England, but British statesmen and manufacturers were alike resolved that it should not sunder the commercial dependence. For this reason harsh laws were enacted, forbidding any person, under pain of forfeiture, to carry or send from the United Kingdom models, patterns, or machinery, that would be likely to aid a young people in setting up a new branch of business. Nay, artisans themselves were liable to detention. Under these circumstances young Slater neither dares inform his family of his destination, nor take with him patterns, drawings, or memoranda, that can betray his occupation, or reveal his plans.

He arrives in New York, and engages with a manufacturing company. The water power of that neighborhood, however, does not satisfy him. The business wherein he was employed seems inferior and unpromising, compared with that to which he had been accustomed ; and that God who directs man's steps, and prepares the heart, threw him into contact with the captain of a Providence packet, and he informs him of the efforts that Moses Brown is making to introduce the manufacture of cotton. With characteristic promptness the young man writes to Mr. Brown. In the business of cotton spinning, he says, "I flatter myself that I can give the greatest satisfaction, in making machinery, making good yarn, either for stockings or twist, as any that is made in England ; as I have had opportunity, and an oversight, of Sir Richard Arkwright's works, and in Mr. Strut's mill for upwards of eight years."

Mr. Brown replies that he has transferred the business to Almy & Brown. He candidly informs the young man that he fears that they can hardly give him such encouragement as he could receive in his present place of business. "As the frame we have," he writes, "is the first attempt of the kind that has been made in America, it is too imperfect to afford much encouragement ; we hardly know what to say to thee ; but if thou thought thou couldst perfect and conduct them to profit, if thou wilt come and do it, thou shalt have all the profits made of them,

over and above the interest of the money they cost, and the wear and tear of them. We will find stock and be repaid in yarn as we may agree for six months. And this we do for the information thou can give, if fully acquainted with the business. . . . We have secured only a temporary water convenience, but if we find the business profitable, can perpetuate one that is convenient. . . . If thy present situation does not come up to what thou wishest, and, from thy knowledge of the business, can be ascertained of the advantages of the mills, so as to come and work ours, and have the *credit* as well as advantage of perfecting the first water-mill in America, we should be glad to engage thy care so long as they can be made profitable to both, and we can agree."

This letter, from which I have been quoting, was dated Providence, 10th 12th month, 1789. Soon after Mr. Slater comes to Providence, and late in that year, or early in 1790, is taken to the village of Pawtucket, in this town, to see the machines. He does not view them with admiration by any means. Says Mr. Brown, "When Samuel saw the old machines, he felt down-hearted with disappointment, and shook his head, and said, 'These will not do; they are good for nothing in their present condition, nor can they be made to answer.'" Fortunately, however, fellow-citizens, the spirit of both these men was too resolute to succumb to trifling difficulties. After various disappointments, it was proposed that Mr. Slater should erect the series of machines termed the Arkwright patents. He accedes to the proposition on one condition, namely, that a man should be furnished for him to work on wood, who should be put under bonds neither to steal the patterns nor disclose the nature of the works. "Under my proposals," says he, "if I do not make as good yarn as they do in England, I will have nothing for my services, but will throw the whole of what I have attempted over the bridge."

The shop in which Mr. Slater begun the manufacture of his machines stood on what was then called Quaker Lane, now Pleasant street. The mechanic employed to assist him was Mr. Sylvanus Brown, father of our enterprising fellow-citizen, Capt. James S. Brown. That shop is now the salesroom of Mr.

Beers, and adjoins his baker's shop. Everything was managed with the greatest secrecy. Shutters were put on the front windows, and the back windows were shielded by blinds. The various patterns were made of wood, all the parts being first constructed of that material, to see whether they could be made to work. The motive power was furnished by a wheel, which was turned by an aged negro by the name of Prime, or fully Primus Jenks, as he had once been a slave of one of the Jenkses. There was no fear that he would pilfer their patterns, or disclose their plans. Moses Brown visited the shop every day to witness the progress making. In due time Mr. Slater built a water frame of 24 spindles, two carding machines, and the drawing and roping frames necessary to prepare for the spinning; and soon after added a frame of 48 spindles. When all the preliminary work was done, everything was found to work satisfactorily but the carder. After vainly trying to remedy that, Mr. Slater was almost in despair. The most agonizing thought with him was not, however, that he had failed, but that the men who had confided in him would think him an impostor. He even contemplated running away, but his companion dissuaded him from so rash a step. "Have you ever seen one of these carders work in your own country?" asks Mr. Sylvanus Brown, looking him steadily in the eye. "Yes," was the prompt reply. "Then it can be made to work here." As Mr. B. was waiting a few minutes for his dinner one day, he took up a pair of hand-cards that his wife had been using, and examined the shape of the teeth. He saw that they were bent somewhat differently from those in the machine, and the thought suggests itself, by altering the shape of the teeth we can surmount the difficulty. Mr. Brown promptly tried the experiment, and the machine worked.

From the patterns thus made, such castings as were needed were supplied from Mr. Wilkinson's shop, and the machines were set up in a small building then standing on what was then the southwest abutment of the bridge over the Pawtucket. That shop no longer stands, for it was swept away by the angry surges of the Blackstone, in the great freshet of 1807. Operations were begun in the fall of 1790, or the winter of 1791.

"I was then in my tenth year," says Mr. Smith Wilkinson, "and went to work with him, and began attending the breaker. The mode of laying the cotton was by hand, taking up a handful, and pulling it apart with both hands, shifting it all into the right hand, to get the staple of the cotton straight, and fix the handful, so as to hold it firm, and then applying it to the surface of the breaker, moving the hand horizontally across the card to and fro, until the cotton was fully prepared."

I hardly need remind you, however, that in preparing even this machinery Mr. Slater encountered no trifling obstacles. Skilled mechanics of the class needed for his work were entirely lacking ; drawings, models, patterns, he had none ; his sole reliance was on a retentive memory, a determined will, and the help of God. He was fortunate, however, in the home that he found. He went to board in the family of Oziel Wilkinson ; from him and from his ingenious son he doubtless received many a profitable hint ; from Mrs. Wilkinson he had genial sympathy and motherly care ; and from a daughter, who afterwards became Mrs. Slater, co-operation and tender love. Only the Omniscient One knows the mighty aid which that household afforded the otherwise lonely stranger, who was striving to transplant to the shores of the Pawtucket the perfected invention of England. In the restricted quarters of that rude mill, Mr. Slater continued his operations for about twenty months, at the end of which time several thousand pounds of yarn had accumulated on the hands of himself and partners, notwithstanding every effort to sell and weave it. When indeed 500 pounds had accumulated, Moses Brown writes to Mr. S., "Thee must shut down thy gates, or thee will spin up all my farms into cotton yarn." Obstacles had meanwhile been successfully surmounted ; Arkwright's machines had been reproduced ; mechanics had been trained ; the problem had been solved ; the waters of the Pawtucket were made subservient to a new kind of manufacture ; and the spinning of cotton by water was acclimated in the United States. Who has despised the day of small things ? What an expansion of industry was destined to flow from that successful enterprise ! Well did President Jackson say to Mr. Slater, some forty odd years afterwards, "I under-

stand you taught us how to spin, so as to rival Great Britain in her manufactures; you set all these thousands of spindles at work, which I have been delighted to view, and which have made so many happy by a lucrative employment.” “Yes, sir,” was the modest reply; “I suppose that I gave out the psalm, and they have been singing to the tune ever since.” Happily, fellow-citizens, it is a psalm whose singing brings profit, as well as pleasure.

The experiment had succeeded in that old shop, and a new mill was erected. The building so long known by the name of Slater’s mill, and which has for several years been occupied by the Pawtucket Hair Cloth Company, was built in 1793. During the same year mills were reared by Oziel Wilkinson and Thomas Arnold; the former was a slitting mill, and the latter a flouring mill. Indeed, the claim can be justly put forth that the first flouring mill in the State was erected in this town.

I have already spoken in brief of the extent to which manufacturing of iron was carried on in North Providence at this early period. In a letter written by Moses Brown, near the close of 1791, he says: “The manufacture of iron into blistered steel, equal in quality to English, has ‘been begun within about a year in North Providence, and is carried on by Oziel Wilkinson. I thought of speaking also of pig and bar iron, slitting it into nail rods, rolling into hoops and plates, making it into spades and shovels, hot and cold nails, anchors, &c., all in this district.’”

Another interesting fact may be named. In speaking of the inventive genius of David Wilkinson, I mentioned that I should have occasion to speak of him again. About the year 1794 there was a man living in Providence named Elijah Ormsbee. He was born in Rehoboth, but had worked for a season near Albany. While there his observation of the difficulty of navigating the Hudson by sails alone, led him to think of steam as a propelling power. While employed at Cranston, repairing a large steam engine used for pumping water from an ore bed, he was called on by Mr. David Wilkinson, and communicated to him the idea of a steamboat. He offered to furnish the boat, provided Mr. W. would provide the engine. The proposition

was accepted ; Mr. Wilkinson went home, made his patterns, cast and bored the cylinder, suggested two plans of paddles, and the boat was finished. At a retired place called Winsor's cove, about three miles and a half from Providence, Ormsbee completed his arrangements, and, on one pleasant evening, made his first trip to Providence. On the following day, he went in his steamboat to Pawtucket, to show her to his friends, and the two ingenious mechanics exhibited her between the two bridges. "After our frolic was over," says Mr. Wilkinson in writing of the matter more than half a century afterwards, "being short of funds, we hauled the boat up and gave it over." It is fair to claim that, had the Pawtucket been a longer stream, so that steam had been as important for it as for the Hudson, or had some discerning capitalist been ready to afford the pecuniary aid needful for testing and perfecting the invention, the chaplet that adorns the head of Fulton might have been woven for the brows of Wilkinson and Ormsbee. And the Pawtucket river and Narragansett bay would have had an additional claim to fame.

In 1797, Mr. David Wilkinson perfected his slide lathe, and on the following year obtained a patent for it. As, however, the machine business was then in its infancy, but little profit flowed to the ingenious inventor. Before the time arrived for its extensive use, the original patent ran out, and Mr. W. being occupied with other business, and planning other contrivances, neglected to secure a renewal. Fifty years after the original patent was granted, Congress voted him ten thousand dollars as a partial remuneration "for the benefits accruing to the public service from the use of the principle of the guage and sliding lathe, of which he was the inventor, now in use in the workshops of the government at the different national arsenals and armories." The Senate Committee on Military Affairs, who recommended the above-named appropriation, was composed of Messrs. Rusk of Texas, Cass of Michigan, Davis of Mississippi, Dix of New York, and Benton of Missouri.

This enterprising man was not only occupied with his own private business, but was interested with others in more extensive operations. . At a furnace in this town, owned by him in

connection with other parties, cannon were cast solid and bored out by water power, early in the century. "It was then the current conversation, that to Pawtucket belonged the credit of the first cannon cast solid in the world. They were bored by making the drill or borer stationary, and having the cannon revolve against the drill." A paragraph from a familiar letter of Mr. Wilkinson's, written years afterwards, gives a succinct statement of the business activity of North Providence between the years 1800 and 1829:

"We built machinery to go to almost every part of the country;—to Pomfret and Killingly, Conn.; to Hartford, Vt.; to Waltham, Norton, Raynham, Plymouth, Halifax, Plympton, Middleboro', and other places in Massachusetts; for Wall & Wells, Trenton, N. J.; for Union & Gray, on the Patapsco; for the Warren factories, on the Gunpowder, near Baltimore; to Tarboro' and Martinburgh, N. C.; to two factories in Georgia; to Louisiana; to Pittsburg; to Delaware; to Virginia, and other places. Indeed, Pawtucket was doing something for almost every part of the country."

In 1799 the second cotton mill was begun. This was reared by Mr. Oziel Wilkinson and his three sons-in-law, Samuel Slater, Timothy Greene and William Wilkinson, and was built on the Massachusetts side of the river. I have named Mr. Greene as a son-in-law of Oziel Wilkinson. He had been previously engaged in the manufacture of leather. His tannery occupied the site of what are now called Greene's mills. Indeed, his original business was the manufacture of shoes, and even after he gave his attention to tanning, he employed several men in the former business. As illustrating the extent of his operations in tanning, the incidental statement of one of his workmen may be quoted: "We ground 200 cords of bark per year, while I worked for Mr. Greene. We tanned 1000 hides a year for him, and fulled 1500 for others." Mr. Greene's activity contributed to the prosperity of our town, and his descendants have continued to do their share of the business of this place.

About this time another kind of business was begun. There was an ingenious clock-maker residing here by the name of J. Field. He commenced the casting of brass in the anchor shop of Mr. Oziel Wilkinson.

Another important branch of business claims at least a passing notice. It was that of ship-building. This was carried on extensively on both sides of the Pawtucket river. In the Sergeant's trench case, George Robinson, who plied his business in North Providence, testified that between the years 1794 and 1805, he built seventeen vessels of from 80 to 280 tons burden. He employed from ten to twenty ship carpenters. In the same case, Thomas Arnold testified that he was concerned in building seven or eight vessels. Other parties were also employed in this business, and all of them had the iron-work done in the shop of the Wilkinsons, and obtained their anchors from the various anchor shops in this town.

The above facts I obtain from an interesting abstract of the testimony in the case just spoken of, which is now in the possession of Samuel Greene, of Woonsocket, who was himself an enterprising artisan in this place years ago. And in glancing hastily over that volume, I find evidence of the existence of other kinds of industry. One witness speaks at one time of having worked in a chocolate mill. He was also employed in 1797 and 1798 in the lower anchor shop. While there he was engaged in welding gun-barrels and making scythes. In those two years he welded 1400 gun-barrels, and assisted in making forty dozen scythes. These may seem like trifling details, but before machinery was perfected as has since been done, they bespeak activity and enterprise here. In the beginning of the present century, also, two manufactories of snuff were in operation.

For years manufacturing was mainly confined to the village of Pawtucket in our town. Near the close of the Revolutionary war, indeed, a lime-kiln was in operation near the present residence of Lemuel Angell, Esq.; but after a while the quarry whence the limestone was obtained was exhausted, and the business was given up. The employment of the residue of the inhabitants was mainly agricultural. Indeed, there is reason to believe that more farming was done in our town about the commencement of the present century than now. Every farmer sixty years ago raised his own rye and corn, and provided the entire food of his household from his own soil. Tobacco was also

reared to some extent. Tracts are now covered with forests, which half a century ago were meadows.

The time came, however, when other parts of the town were to engage in manufacturing. In 1807, Judge Lyman and others bought a privilege on the Woonasquatucket river, and erected a mill. In later years, along the western part of the town, the Greystone mill, the Allendale, Centerdale, Manton, Dyerville, and the Atlantic De Laine mills have been constructed. And it may be interesting to note the increase of wealth in our town from the introduction of new forms of industry. In 1815, Lemuel Angell, Esq., was collector of taxes. At that time from what is now Olneyville to Manton there were but five estates taxed, and the whole amount assessed was fifteen dollars. During the past year the tax of the Atlantic De Laine works alone was nearly four thousand dollars. As indicating the same fact, another incident may be mentioned. About the year 1810, Oziel Wilkinson and his son Abraham were estimating the expenses of the town for the ensuing year. As they were both influential politicians, they were making arrangements in advance for the annual town meeting. With a piece of chalk they marked on the counter of their store the sums supposed to be needed for the various departments, to wit, for highway tax, support of poor, &c. As common schools were not then established by law, there was no sum specified for them. As they added up the column they found the amount to be about \$800. And the elder Wilkinson energetically exclaimed, "It will not answer, Abraham; we must cut some of these figures down. The town of North Providence will not stand such a tax as that." Times have changed, fellow-citizens. This year a tax is assessed of seventy thousand dollars; and the only question debated was, Shall we raise this sum, or a larger one?

For years the mode of weaving cloth was by hand looms. The cotton was first sent out from the various shops and mills to be picked. This involved much waste, delay, and expense. Four cents per pound was paid for picking, and the owners complained that what was stolen by the various families to whom the cotton was entrusted, doubled this sum. In addition

to this, after the yarn was spun, it must be sent out to be woven into the various kinds of cloth. From six to twelve cents per yard was the current price. Of course the proprietors of mills were anxious to be rid of such inconvenience. In a few years a picker was devised; and about the year 1814 weaving by power-looms was commenced. The first loom used in this town was J. Thorpe's, which was, if I am rightly informed, an upright loom. In 1816, however, the Scotch loom was introduced into Lyman's mill. It was brought to the notice of Judge Lyman by Mr. William Gilmore. The loom was made under the inspection of Mr. G. himself, and at first failed to work. Judge Lyman, of course, thinks of David Wilkinson when any difficulty arises, and Mr. W. goes over to see the machine. He quickly discovers the trouble, suggests a means of removing it, and in due time the loom does its work. Manufacturers in other parts of the country soon hear that a loom is working successfully in North Providence, and flock from every quarter to see the wonder. All gladly purchase from Mr. G. the right to use his pattern; and to the present time, the same loom, with trifling change, is used in all the cotton mills in our land.

I have not time, fellow-citizens, to specify the period when other mills were erected in our town. My object has been mainly to mention the earliest essays in manufacturing here. Where a branch of business, largely carried on elsewhere in our country, has been established here, there seems little to challenge attention. But before I dismiss this part of my subject, I may properly enumerate some of the important inventions that have been made during the present century in our town. I ought to have mentioned that Mr. Gilmore introduced a dresser from a Scotch invention. In 1822, Mr. Asa Arnold invented the Differential Speeder. In 1823, Pitcher & Gale invented a geared cone speeder. In 1824, Pitcher & Gale having dissolved, our ingenious fellow-citizen Mr. James S. Brown became associated with the former in business, their shop being on the eastern side of the Pawtucket. In 1838, Mr. Brown invented a machine for boring passage for rover and speeder flyers. In 1842, Mr. Brown dissolved partnership with Mr.

Pitcher, and in 1849 commenced the erection of the spacious building which he now occupies in our town. In 1852, he took out a patent for turning irregular forms; in 1857, a patent for improvement in speeder. In 1863, he obtained a patent for grinding files, and another, for improvement in furnace for hardening files.

I am aware that I am here treading on delicate ground. My education and mode of life have not given me knowledge of mechanical inventions. I know that I am not presenting an exhaustive account of the important inventions which have given Pawtucket fame. A lawyer of large experience in patent cases lately remarked that it is truly surprising, in investigating the history of valuable inventions, to see how many of them you can trace back to Pawtucket. I stop my account, therefore, here, by remarking that important improvements in the manufacture of hair cloth have been made in this town, and that during the present year E. O. Potter has obtained a patent for an improvement in the mode of cutting files.

But though I have closed my account of inventions, I am not precluded from remarking that for years calico printing has been extensively carried on near the Woonasquatucket river. The establishment owned by Richmond & Co. has proved a center around which other branches of manufacturing have largely clustered. And still another kind of business deserves a passing notice, from the largeness of its increase. In 1834, Lewis Fairbrother, Esq., came here to establish himself. He began the manufacture of picker-string and lace leather. At that time there was but one other manufactory of a like character in the country, and that was conducted on a very small scale. So light was the demand for the commodity, that the proprietor of the other establishment begun with tubs alone in preparing his leather. Mr. F. was more enterprising and farsighted. He had the hardihood to begin with a vat or two. Those who see from day to day the activity of Mr. F.'s successors in business, and of their rivals in this neighborhood, need no other assurance of Mr. Fairbrother's forecast. In 1850, Messrs. Corliss & Nightingale moved from Providence to our own town. Their establishment, too, has proved a nucleus

around which other and different kinds of manufacturing have gathered. The proximity of that neighborhood to the busy part of Providence invites capital from the city. Indeed, a stranger, ignorant of the boundary lines, knows not where the city ends, and the town begins.

I have thus completed, fellow-citizens, what I designed to say of the industrial history of our town. I cannot close this branch of my subject, however, without a word as to our indebtedness to the men whose energy and industry brought such activity and thrift to our region. We have borrowed from the Greek language the word *aristocrat*. Too often the term is employed to describe a mushroom class, who are subsisting on the wealth which their ancestors won, and, by their conceit and disdain, are trying to fasten a reproach on the class from whom their ancestors sprung. Inherited riches are their sole passport to eminence. Among the Greeks it is said that the class who styled themselves the *aristoi*, that is, *the best*, were generally least entitled to that term. They were lawless, reckless, tyrannical, and frequently disturbed the peace of their communities by their insufferably disorderly conduct. It is our boast as a people, that we have no order of nobility. As some one said of Cincinnati, "the democracy there consists of those who now kill hogs for a living; the aristocracy, of those whose fathers killed hogs." Our true aristocracy are those who, springing from the laboring class, by sheer force of character and untiring toil, work their way to eminence and thrift, and who never forget the people from whom they spring. And if to this capacity and energy, they but add high-toned principle, and seek but to make the community nobler, as well as richer, they have a higher patent of nobility than any monarch can bestow. Jefferson is reported to have said that that man is a public benefactor who makes two blades of grass grow where but one grew before. And has not the artisan who acclimates a useful branch of industry, the inventor who perfects a new machine, and thus introduces a new branch of employment, or provides comforts that render life easier, or home more dear, an equal claim to be regarded as a benefactor? As local benefactors our Jenkses, our Browns, our Slaters, our Wilkinsons, our Greenes, of past

generations, (it were invidious to speak of the living,) may challenge the love of their successors. How much did they do to give permanence to society! How many did they help cling around the old homestead! How much thrift and content were they instrumental in fostering! Our town owes them a debt of gratitude. We share, fellow-citizens, in the benefits they conferred. Other men labored, and we have entered into their labor. Inscribe their names high on the roll of honor, and let their memory be ever green. But let us not forget that there are business successors of these men, whose energy, and enterprise, and faith, have established new branches of industry in this place. Too often men fail of justice from their contemporaries. Envy blinds multitudes to their real merits. Let us be prompt to recognize worth and energy and skill. If a Corliss introduce among us the manufacture of steam engines; a Jeffers, that of the fire engine; a Dexter cling worthily to his knitting cotton, wherein he has won a national fame; if a Brown wield his influence to introduce among us file manufacturing; if he make inventions, and transplant branches of industry that swell our population, and increase our wealth, let us rejoice in whatever prosperity they win. In their success we are all interested. No farmer that brings a dozen eggs to market; no landlord that has even a cottage to let; no laborer seeking employment; but that is benefited by the thrift of our citizens. We constitute one body, and if one member be benefited, all the other members should rejoice. Let envy be forever hushed, and detraction be dumb!

### *Fire Department.*

So long as our town remained a part of Providence, it of course depended on the fire department of that town to extinguish any serious conflagration. And even after North Providence was incorporated, many years elapsed before any steps were taken for organizing a fire company here. The General Assembly granted in February, 1801, a charter for a fire district in the village of Pawtucket. A single company was authorized, to have not exceeding fourteen members. The company was not organized, however, till 1803. The first captain

was David Wilkinson, and that skillful mechanic built the first fire engine. It lacked suction hose, and was filled by hand. From that time to the present, as necessity has required, additions have been made to our effective force. At the present time the Pawtucket fire district has three fire engines, and one hook and ladder company. This force, in conjunction with the fire companies of the town of Pawtucket, and the village of Central Falls, constitutes a very efficient body in protecting us from the devouring element. Our citizens rely confidently on their promptitude, courage, and skill, and have never found their confidence misplaced.

#### *Banks.*

The first incorporated moneyed institution established in this town was the Manufacturers Bank, which was chartered in 1814, and remained here till after the disastrous business revulsion in 1829. Having sustained heavy losses, it was removed to Providence. The next bank was styled the Farmers and Mechanics Bank, and obtained its charter in 1822 or 1823. The same cause that crippled the Manufacturers Bank carried down this institution also. A new company was organized, however, upon its forfeited charter, and now does business, in Providence, under the name of the Phenix Bank. Of the banks now existing in this town, the oldest is the New England Pacific, which, originally chartered in 1818, and established in Smithfield, was, after certain reverses, transferred to the village of Pawtucket, North Providence. The North Providence Bank was chartered in 1834. The Peoples Bank was incorporated in 1846. The Slater Bank in 1855. During the current year a new bank has been organized under the United States Banking Laws, called the First National Bank of Pawtucket. The Peoples Bank having decided to close its business, most of the capital is absorbed by the National Bank. The Slater Bank has also become a national institution.

Of Savings Institutions there are two located in this town. The eldest, though incorporated under the style of The Pawtucket Institution for Savings in 1828, was not organized till 1836. Its present number of depositors is 2500; amount

deposited, \$777,000. The Providence County Savings Bank was organized in 1853. Its present number of depositors is 2060; amount deposited, \$644.576.

### *Newspapers.*

But few towns in New England possessing a population of thousands, can be found, but that boast of having had a newspaper. For years, however, from various causes the country newspapers have been dwindling in number. The larger city journals are so easily supplied, through the multiplication of railroads, to the citizens of our various villages, and the expenses of publication have so largely increased, that merely local journals have been allowed to die. It argues therefore not a little merit in an editor, not a little tact and enterprise in a publisher, when a country journal has been successfully maintained in the immediate vicinity of a city so large as Providence. The Pawtucket Gazette and Chronicle has existed upwards of twenty-eight years. The Chronicle was first published in 1825, by John C. Harwood, and was edited by William H. Sturtevant. After Mr. H. had published it for about two years, he sold it to Randall Meacham. In a short time Mr. M. engaged Samuel M. Fowler as editor, and the two subsequently were associated. Mr. M. afterwards withdrew, and Mr. F. remained proprietor till his death in 1832. On his decease the paper passed into the hands of H. & J. E. Rousmaniere, and remained in their possession till 1839. At that time, Robert Sherman, Esq., who had established the Pawtucket Gazette in 1838, purchased the Chronicle, and united the two papers. The united journal enjoys a large local circulation, and can claim the merit of being managed with ability, courtesy, and dignity. And it has a merit which too many country papers lack; it is a good local paper.

### *Bridges over the Pawtucket.*

It was many years after the settlement of our town before any bridge was erected over the Pawtucket. The water now flowing in the Blackstone is more regular in quantity than it was years ago. The building of dams on the Blackstone, and the

forming of numerous reservoirs, make the volume of water much larger in summer than formerly. For weeks in the warmer season of the year it used to be easy to cross the Pawtucket a few rods below the falls, by fording. In 1713, however, a bridge was erected at the joint expense of Massachusetts and Rhode Island. In about sixteen years the bridge became so weak that the General Assembly voted to rebuild it, provided Massachusetts would bear half the expense. On that colony's delaying, our General Assembly passed a resolve, advising that the bridge be "demolished, that it may not remain as a trap to endanger men's lives." Massachusetts appointed a committee to assist in this work, and in 1730 the bridge was taken down. A year or two afterwards the bridge was rebuilt; and in 1741 was again rebuilt. In 1746 a new boundary line was run by authority of our General Assembly, and, from that time to the present, Massachusetts refused to pay anything for maintaining a bridge over the Pawtucket.

Originally the bridge stood a little south of the place which the present bridge occupies; but the advantages of its present site became so manifest that it was chosen. On the 15th day of February, 1807, about two-thirds of the west end of the bridge was swept away by what was well styled the *great freshet*; but the bridge was promptly rebuilt. In 1817 it was again reconstructed, chiefly at the expense of our town. In 1832 it was rebuilt once more, at the expense in part of the town, in part of private subscribers. In 1839 the bridge needed repairs, and the question was now earnestly put among our citizens, Whose duty is it to maintain this bridge? Investigation showed that the obligation rested on the State. In 1843 the old bridge was removed, and a new one built. In 1857 this bridge was found badly needing repair, and the question arose, Is it worth while for us to be annoyed every few years with the work and discomfort of building a new bridge? This question was answered negatively, and measures were at once taken for rearing a stone bridge. Preparations were made during the fall and winter of that year; stones were quarried and shaped; and on the 6th of July of the following year travel was suspended on the old bridge, and its destruction com-

menced. In four months the work was completed, and on the 4th of November, 1858, the present structure was opened for travel. It is at once an ornament and a credit to our town, and, unless shaken by an earthquake, or blown up by malice, will stand long after the youngest child who witnessed its dedication has passed away.

### *Education.*

Rhode Island was long behind the other New England States in providing for the education of her youth. Providence, indeed, early sought to establish free schools, but the liberality of her wealthier citizens was overruled by the short-sightedness of poorer, but more sordid men. For nearly two centuries whatever education was furnished to the young, was supplied by private schools. In the village of Pawtucket a company was organized near the close of the last century, to build a school-house. In due time the edifice long known as the *Red School-house* was reared near the site of our town hall. For years this was the only building that could be used for any secular public gathering. It was long used by the First Baptist Society as a kind of vestry. Here the day school was taught; here the Sunday School long held. At a time when the population of what is now the town of Pawtucket was quite small, as that territory was then in Massachusetts, and the laws of that State required the free education of the young, the people of that district made a contract with the teacher on the Rhode Island side of the Pawtucket, to teach their children; and they were also sent to the Red School-house. Subsequently a school was established by a Mr. Bailey, who taught his pupils in the basement of his house, not far from the school-house now owned by the first district in this town.

The time came, however, when the citizens of our State perceived that sound policy, no less than duty, required that as many of our youth as possible should receive education. In 1828, common schools were established by law. Our town was not slow to provide them; and from that time to the present the youth of both sexes have been permitted to enjoy advantages which only the children of the wealthy had enjoyed before.

At the present time there are ten school districts in our town. Over two thousand scholars have attended our public schools during the past year. Eleven thousand dollars have been paid for teachers' salaries, in addition to the various sums paid for fuel and other expenses by the different districts. Large sums have also been paid for private schools, and a proper high school seems now a necessity in a town so rich and populous as ours. If not every citizen can feel that he owns a portion of our soil, let every one at least feel that his children have a right in our schools.

And may I not say, fellow-citizens, that still another agent is needed. It has well been said that the youth, when he leaves the school or the college, instead of having finished his education, has but just begun it. Apart from that instruction which the world can give him, however, he still needs the help of books. Talents and aptitude are not confined to the wealthy, and many a youth would gladly increase his knowledge, had he suitable books to read. Some of the cities and larger towns in our country have public libraries, which are an honor to them. As yet, North Providence has nothing of the kind. It were perhaps too much to hope that some son of our town, resident elsewhere, will imitate the liberality of a Peabody to his native town; but we have rich men in abundance here, who can provide such a library. Will not some of them soon give their townsmen reason to thank them?

#### *The patriotic history of our town.*

Since the organization of our town there have been calls more than once for the more obtrusive virtues of patriotism and manly courage. North Providence was incorporated in a brief breathing-place between two exhausting wars. The French and Indian war had but just closed, and the lurid folds of the storm that was soon to break over our devoted land, and to rage for eight weary years, were despaired on the horizon. Of those whose homes were in this town, and who did bold service during the Revolutionary war, the name of Commodore Hopkins stands eminent. Though born in another town, he made for years this place his abode, and his ashes are mouldering within

our borders. It were superfluous to praise him. His valor is a part of the heroic heritage of his native State. His name and Perry's, who alike, in different wars, upheld the honor of our country on the sea, have given our little commonwealth cause to glory in her naval warriors. For between two and three years Hopkins was commander-in-chief of the navy, but the bitter sectional feeling in Congress, which operated so much on many an occasion to the disparagement of New England men, finally succeeded in ousting him from his honorable position. But by this act our country suffered most. Another eminent patriot of the Revolution was Capt. Stephen Olney, a native and resident of North Providence. During the entire contest, he remained in the service, and signalized his valor on many a well-fought field. His heroism was specially manifest at Yorktown. Two redoubts were occupied by the British which checked the advance of our army, and Washington decided that they must be carried. To gratify and provoke national emulation, the task of capturing one was assigned to the French, that of the other to the Americans. Lafayette and Col. Hamilton commanded the American force. In selecting an officer to head the storming column, Lafayette made choice of Capt. Olney. The company which the latter commanded is said to have been mainly composed of North Providence men. Capt. O. well knew the peril of the undertaking. He calls his company together, and frankly states to them the dangerous work to which he had been assigned. "Most of us will probably fall, and I want nobody to go, but such as are willing to risk their lives. I order no one; let those that are ready to volunteer step two paces in front." Instantly every man stepped forward.

The American forlorn hope was led by Col. Gimatt, a French officer. The entire column marched in perfect silence, and with unloaded guns, resolved to carry the works at the point of the bayonet. At the distance of two hundred yards from the redoubt the column halted, to make the final arrangements for the assault. One man from every company of the force was detailed for the forlorn hope. Six or eight pioneers lead the way; as many of the forlorn hope come next; then Col. Gimatt with half a dozen volunteers; and then the main column led by Capt.

Olney himself. The dread silence was broken by a heavy discharge of the musketry, as our force reached the abatis. While the pioneers were attempting to cut this away, some of the main force climbed through it and entered the ditch. Foremost among these is Capt. Olney. As soon as a few of his men are collected, he forces his way between the palisades, and with a voice that rises above even the roar of the conflict, cries out, "Capt. Olney's company—form here!" The audacious order meets a stern response. A gun-shot wound in the arm, a bayonet thrust in the thigh, and another in the abdomen, admonish our brave townsman that war is no holiday affair. With one hand he presses in his intestines, while with the other he parries the bayonets of his foes. He is obliged to be carried from the field, but not until most of the regiment have entered the redoubt, and he has given the command to "Form in order." In ten minutes from the first fire of the British, the redoubt was in our possession.

Lafayette praised the gallantry of Olney in general orders, and still more warmly acknowledged it in private correspondence. In 1824, when the chivalric Frenchman was making his tour through our land, he visited Providence. Among those who gathered to greet our nation's benefactor, was Capt. Olney. Standing on the steps of the State House, he waited the approach of his old commander. As they met, though years had weakened the vigor of both, they disregarded cold, tame conventionalities, and, like fond brothers, clasped each other in a warm embrace. Capt. O. was for twenty-five years president of the town council, and for fifteen years represented North Providence in the General Assembly.

The reputation of those earlier days has been well maintained in later times. When treason reared its unhallowed hand, and struck at the life of our common government, Rhode Island was not wholly unprepared for the struggle that ensued. Many others of the northern States, which have since rendered good service, were destitute of any organized militia; and, when Baltimore was in possession of a treacherous mob, and Washington was severed from the loyal north, our little State heard the cry for help. Our patriotic governor had been in intimate corres-

pondence with Gen. Scott; and, when the exigency came, the soldiers of Rhode Island followed close on the heels of those of Massachusetts. On the eve of the Revolution, among other companies, the North Providence Rangers was chartered. Two or three years before the late rebellion commenced, the Pawtucket Light Guard was organized. And when volunteers were called for, four years ago, to open the road to our national capital, one company, largely composed of our own citizens, went from North Providence and Pawtucket. When, too, Burnside first showed on the field of battle those qualities which have since won for him a national reputation, in those Rhode Island regiments which followed his lead, a Slocum and a Tower from our own town sealed their devotion to country with their blood. And from the day when that first battle of Bull Run was fought, how many a son of our town, in fortress and in camp, on the lone picket and in the dread fray, has watched and prayed and fought, till victory has come, and we can rejoice together in a saved, a free, a regenerated country!

*Moral history.*

But another branch of history claims attention. Inventive genius and mechanical skill give man control over the material world, but not over his own passions. Education may sharpen the intellect, but leave man a shrewd savage. Heroism on the battle-field is not incompatible with the character of a barbarian. The pen of inspiration has written that "righteousness exalteth a nation." Integrity, high moral principle, religion, are our safeguard, and constitute the mightiest conservative power in a community. A few words, therefore, about our religious societies, and other moral agencies, seem in order.

I preface this account with a reference to one of our present honored citizens. Near the close of the last century a lad came to this place from a farming town in Massachusetts. Though born in that State, there seemed a kind of poetic justice in his coming to spend the larger part of a useful life in this commonwealth. In the deed from which I quoted, conveying to Joseph Jenks the land once owned by Ezekiel Holliman, it is mentioned that it bordered on land owned by a Mr. Dexter. Dr. Benedict

suggests that this was Gregory Dexter, an eminent clergyman in the Baptist denomination, and fourth pastor of the First Baptist Church in Providence. This lad was a descendant in the sixth generation from Gregory Dexter, and bore the name of Nathaniel Gregory B. Dexter. The free and easy condition of matters here in respect to religion jarred rudely with the native sentiment of reverence that he had for the Sabbath. He was soon employed by Mr. Slater in his mill. At that time no regular meetings were held. A small Baptist meeting-house was standing, which could be used by any other denomination, when the Baptists were not using it, but was not always used. Sunday was observed by some as a holiday, though the sound of the trip-hammers and forges could be heard, and young men and old were seen playing ball, and occupied in other sports. "Mr. Slater," said the wondering lad, "you don't have any Sabbath here in Rhode Island. I don't know what to do." Mr. S. doubtless felt the truth of the boy's words; and when, a while after, he found seven of the lads engaged in his employ debating whether they should go on that Sabbath day to Smithfield, to rob a farmer's orchard, he rightly decided to try and shield them from temptation. "Boys," said he, "go into my house, and I will give you as many apples as you want, and I will keep a Sunday School." That school, commenced in 1799, was composed of seven scholars; its library consisted of three Webster's spelling-books; the branches taught were reading, writing, and arithmetic. A year or two ago, Capt. Dexter met the present honored governor of Massachusetts in Boston, and the governor was reading the inscription on the patriarch's gold-headed cane, which stated that he was a scholar in the first Sunday School in America. "Ah!" said Gov. Andrew, "I would rather have that distinction, than to be governor of Massachusetts." Our honored townsman, a link connecting us with past generations, with eye scarce dimmed, and natural force but slightly abated, while he entertains an honest pride that he has for half a century or more prosecuted a business, whose fabric has won a national reputation, glories still more in his connection with the Sabbath School. And whatever men may think, in the estimate of angels, that act of Mr. Slater's, in

assuming for a season, in addition to the cares of a harassing business, the personal charge of educating those youth cast under his care, is his noblest crown.

It is not unlikely that a Sabbath School was kept prior to this for a few weeks, in this place, but we know nothing of its history, and it could have been maintained for but a short time.\* Our first circumstantial knowledge comes through Capt. Dexter. After attending that school for a time, he was himself employed by Mr. Slater and partners, to teach on the Sabbath the youth employed in the mills. And that Sunday School, though designed to furnish simply secular instruction, was the germ in New England of the mighty agency which all sects are now using to impart religious knowledge to the young.

But I pass to the history of religious societies.

The first society organized here was a Baptist one. It was incorporated, as a kind of village organization, about the year 1793. A small house was erected on the lot now held by that society. The ecclesiastical body or church proper was fully organized in 1805. Dr. Benedict, then a student in Brown University, begun his labors here in 1804; and, after finishing his introductory studies, was ordained and settled here. After several years of service, Dr. B. withdrew from pastoral labor. Other clergymen, however, successively filled the post, and the church has ever wielded a potent influence in the town. The present pastor is Rev. C. E. Smith.

The society now known as the Second Baptist Church in North Providence, seems, in its germ at least, to have been the next religious organization in this town. Near the close of the last century, and at the beginning of the present century, Elder Angell preached in a meeting-house near Wenscott reservoir. After a while, however, interest waned, piety languished, and the house of God was forsaken. The windows were broken out, swallows built under the eaves, and around the roof, and the building was a reproach to its owners. At length Elder

\* I base this statement on a memorandum found in the account books of Almy & Brown, or Almy, Brown & Slater. Under date of November 5th, 1797, the following charge occurs: *Cash paid Benjamin Allen, for teaching a school first days, £2. 14s.* The next date for the same object is October 25th, 1800.

Tift begun meetings. An aged friend informs me that he had been to meeting there, when the house was used as a carpenter's shop. The artisan's bench was converted into a kind of pulpit; the minister and deacons stood behind it, and the latter lined off the hymns; the congregation were seated—males, on one side, and females, on the other—on rude seats, made of slabs, supported by four slender legs. After a few years of this kind of worship under difficulties, the meeting-house was taken down, and removed to Fruit Hill. This was done in 1816 or 1817. A new church was then organized, made up of such of the members of the old church as were not physically or spiritually dead; residents of Fruit Hill; and certain brethren from Providence. Its present organization dates from the year 1818.

The next society organized was the St. Paul's Church. Episcopalian services were commenced in North Providence in 1814. The organization, however, dates from December 22d, 1815. Rev. Mr. Blake was the first rector; and the corner stone of the meeting-house was laid on June 24th, 1816. In the fall of 1824, Rev. George Taft came to this town to preach, and has remained till the present day. This long union in days of fickleness is honorable to both pastor and people. The present junior pastor is Rev. J. D'W. Perry.

The first attempts to propagate Methodism in this town were made by circuit preachers prior to 1813. Of course the earlier efforts were without regularity. The first class was formed at some time between 1813 and 1816. This became the nucleus of a church. The first meeting-house was reared in 1829–30. Israel Washburn was the first pastor. The present house of worship was erected in 1841, during the pastorate of Rev. R. M. Hatfield. This edifice was enlarged and refitted in 1857, while Rev. S. F. Upham was pastor. The present pastor is Rev. D. H. Ela.

In 1827 the first Universalist Society was incorporated by name of the First Universalist Society in North Providence. A meeting-house was reared and dedicated, but after being occupied for a few years, passed from the hands of the society. Severe commercial revulsions caused the removal from the town of several of the members; and the meeting-house was finally

bought by the Baptists, and is now called the High Street Baptist Meeting-house. In 1841 another Universalist Society was incorporated under the name of *The Mill Street Universalist Society*. This society is still in existence. The present pastor is Rev. Massena Goodrich.

The Pawtucket Congregational Church was established in what was then Pawtucket, Mass. As, however, a large share of its members reside in North Providence, and as from the length of time for which their present pastor has watched over his flock, both he and his church have wielded a potent moral influence in this community, it seems not improper to chronicle a fact or two as to its organization. In April, 1829, nine members of the church in Attleborough were dismissed to form a church in Pawtucket. A commodious meeting-house had been previously erected, and was in due time dedicated. Two pastors preceded the present one; but in July, 1836, Rev. C. Blodgett was installed, and has emulated the example of Dr. Taft by cleaving to the people of his charge. So long a union is mutually creditable to pastor and people. During the past year, the house in which that church worshiped was destroyed by fire; but I doubt not a still more commodious and attractive one will be reared on the old site.

The land for the Roman Catholic Church was given by David Wilkinson, Esq. In 1829 the church was built, under the supervision of Rev. Mr. Woodly. For a number of years the church was supplied by non-resident clergymen. Father Fenly was the first regular pastor who lived in Pawtucket. Since him three others have had the pastoral charge of St. Mary's Church. The present pastor is Rev. P. G. Delany.

The Allendale Chapel was built by Zachariah Allen in the spring of 1847. Immediately after being dedicated, meetings begun to be held regularly on the Sabbath, though for a couple of years there was no settled pastor. Rev. Christopher Rhodes commenced his labors in May, 1849. A church was organized in April, 1850, under the name of the Allendale Baptist Church.

The Church of the Immaculate Conception was organized in 1858. Their meeting-house was dedicated on July 5th of same year. The present pastor is Rev. E. J. Cooney.

To correct any misapprehension, I may be allowed to add a word here. I give no account of the formation of any religious society within the limits of our town for more than a century and a quarter after its first settlement. Do I then suppose that all its inhabitants were living in skeptical disregard of Christianity? By no means. Churches were organized at an early day in Providence, and doubtless many of the inhabitants of what is now North Providence were members of them. Many of the residents of Pawtucket, too, were Friends, and they went to Smithfield to meeting. Social meetings also were doubtless often held in different neighborhoods. Still, all experience shows that only very devout natures will regularly visit meetings held miles away.

I am aware that some may deem this detail of the history of our religious societies superfluous. I shall be pardoned, I trust, if I dissent from such a judgment. The wealth of a community depends not alone on its riches. These two terms have come, in modern usage, to be regarded as synonymous. In an elder and better usage, the term *wealth* meant the sum total of what contributed to the weal of a people. Not silver and gold, houses and lands, alone, make a community prosperous and happy, but virtue, intelligence, and sympathy must abound, and order and justice be maintained. For these last matters, however, fellow-citizens, we cannot depend on legislation alone. The spirit of our people brooks but few restraints, and specially spurns the fostering of religion by governmental aid. And yet a civilization destitute of Christianity is but gilded barbarism. Ordinary legislation deals only with the overt act. It punishes theft, when committed; while that higher law, which it is the business of the Christian ministry to announce, and of the church to uphold, utters its more emphatic mandate,—*Thou shalt not steal; Thou shalt not even covet.* It deals with the temptation in its very birth. And then those thousand amenities, which sweeten social intercourse, and bind men together with hooks firmer than steel,—how genially are these fostered by Christianity! Indeed, the mightiest problems with which the soul ever grapples, are themes for the pulpit and the church, rather than for the halls of legislation. And many a statesman has

been ready to acknowledge the indebtedness of his country for the highest elements of grandeur to those influences which go forth from the Bible and the sanctuary. Said John Adams, substantially, "I doubt whether we could have passed successfully through the Revolution, had it not been for the moral aid afforded by the clergy." And in the four anxious years through which our nation has been passing, the heroism and stern faith of the loyal north have been largely upheld by the appeals of our preachers, and the prayers of our churches. What though the Christian minister is compelled to say,—*Silver and gold have I none?* Like his great predecessors, he can also add,—*Such as I have, I give thee.* And I trust it will not be deemed indecorous for me to say, that it were hard to find three men in this region who have done more to increase the real wealth of this community than Drs. Benedict, Taft, and Blodgett. Their long residence here, strengthening annually their moral power, has proved an unspeakable benefit to the community. And Goldsmith's lines seem singularly applicable to such as they. To their people,

"——their heart, their love, their griefs are given,  
But all their serious thoughts have rest in heaven."

But it is time, fellow-citizens, that I close. To-day our town begins a second century. It is not improper to ask as to its future. Has our town attained its full growth? Are we to look for decadence, rather than progress? I see not why these questions should be answered in the affirmative. If I rightly interpret the signs of the times, manufacturing is destined to an indefinite expansion in our country. We are a young nation. Though recently tried in the fire, we have shown the wonderful energy of our people, and the strength of free institutions. We emerge from this war burdened with debt, to be sure, yet how much better is our condition than that of our ancestors eighty years ago, at the close of our Revolutionary strife! Then almost everything was to be provided; now the wonderful contrivances of machinery exist among us in unrivalled abundance. Our domestic needs are to be supplied; the question whether our workshops are to be in Europe or in our own country, is

no longer debatable. We are to make our own wares, weave our own cloths, provide our own furniture and implements, on this side of the Atlantic. In a few years manufacturing will be largely extended in the regenerated southern States. We can afford to resign to them the making of the coarser fabrics, especially of cotton, but New England will long continue the workshop of our country for many of those articles that require nice machinery and skilled labor. Already our English brethren, to be sure, are grumbling at our tariff, but our answer to them is brief: "By your selfish policy you prolonged this contest; we put the rebellion down without your help; we shall legislate for our country to suit ourselves. Your trained workmen, your industrious laborers, are welcome to a home here; but our work is mainly to be done in our own land." And while the west, on account of its comparatively small population, and fertile soil, will be slow to establish manufacturing, New England will long retain the precedence. What then is to check the growth of North Providence? Even if our water-power is all taken up,—a point fairly open to discussion,—manufacturing by steam is as economical here as in any part of New England. Capital is here; enterprise is here; laborers can be brought here, and all that seems needed is the forecast to discern the wants of the future, and faith and sagacity to use our means. Our town committed one suicidal act nearly forty years ago. In the severe business revulsion of 1829, David Wilkinson and other enterprising mechanics were allowed to leave the place. The capitalists of the neighborhood should have prohibited it. A few words of encouragement, and, in due time, seasonable pecuniary aid, had kept them here. Other revulsions may occur in the future, but it is not worth while for rich men to conclude that the world is coming to an end, because the wheels of business are temporarily stopped. The wants of a young, vigorous, thrifty nation like ours, a nation so rich in resources and all the elements of material wealth, are constant. A little patience, a little faith, and the storm blows over, and industry resumes its wonted activity. No, fellow-citizens, if you are but true to yourselves, your town will continue to grow. A hundred years ago, and your population was

less than a thousand ; to-day it cannot be much less than fourteen thousand ; and in respect to capital, the disparity is still more largely in our favor. More mills, more workshops, more houses, are yet to be reared within our borders. The time must come when our farmers must vary their agriculture, and, leaving to richer soils the work of supplying the commoner fruits and grains, convert their farms into gardens.

I rejoice in such a prospect. There has been quite too strong a tendency for our New England youth to desert their homes, and emigrate to distant States. True, those States have gained by their coming, but we cannot afford this constant drain. Like the Roman matron, we can say of our sons and daughters, *These are our jewels.* Fain would I see them kept around the old homesteads. Here, where there are a thousand fond recollections of childhood, a thousand dear associations, would we see them lingering in manhood and womanhood, and contributing, by their industry, talents, and virtue, to the real weal of our State. Nurture we then every laudable enterprise ; build we our community up ; and let us ever recollect that where Christian institutions are vigorously sustained, education fostered, order, temperance, and integrity maintained, there property is safest, life dearest, and man happiest. The past record of our town is in many respects honorable. It is a record of unconquerable energy, inventive skill, unflagging toil. The citizens of to-day need not blush for their ancestry. Shall our children's children have equal cause to glory in our wisdom and fidelity ? God grant that they who stand here a hundred years hence, to celebrate the second centennial anniversary of our town, may be able to exult in a free, a united nation, a prosperous Christian people, a thrifty, vigorous community ! O, loved town and land, peace be within your homes, prosperity within your marts and mills !

At the close of the address, the choir sung the old anthem, "Denmark."

The services at the church closed with the benediction by the venerable Rev. DAVID BENEDICT, D. D.

## THE DINNER SPEECHES.

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AFTER the services at the church, the military and firemen formed a procession and marched to Manchester Hall, where an ample table was spread for their entertainment.

The citizens, both ladies and gentlemen, to the number of about two hundred, together with invited guests, proceeded to the Armory of the Pawtucket Light Guard, where a dinner had been prepared by Messrs. Dispeau & Childs. The dinner was a magnificent one, and every plate was filled.

When the company were seated, the Rev. GEORGE TAFT, D. D., invoked the Divine blessing.

After the viands had been disposed of, the Hon. CHARLES S. BRADLEY, President of the day, called to order, and said :

### REMARKS OF MR. BRADLEY.

*Neighbors, fellow-townsman and friends*—No body of American citizens can assemble upon an historical occasion to-day without their first emotion being that of thanksgiving to Almighty God, who, if for a time in His wisdom He has allowed us to be punished for our sins by the scourge of civil war, has at length in His mercy restored to us the Union and peace.

If our minds run back a hundred years in the history of this country, they rest at the other end of the century upon the revered form of Washington, and we cannot but instinctively pray that his spirit may chasten the characters of the youth of our land, so that his moderation, his dignity, the moral grandeur of his nature, may become the type of American mind.

Upon these themes it doth not become me to speak. For to whom shall we turn when we ask for an interpretation of the elements of moral character, but to the reverend clergy around us; and to whom shall we turn for a consideration of the matters pertaining to education, except to those whose life-long labor it is to mould the human intellect. I introduce President Sears of Brown University.

Dr. Sears spoke as follows :

REMARKS OF REV. DR. SEARS.

I rise with unaffected diffidence to answer the sentiment which has been given by the President of the day. Personally I cannot profess to respond. But holding by accident of office a representative place in respect to education, and also, sir, in respect to the ministerial functions, I speak for the class to which I have the honor to belong.

Undoubted reference has been made to the seat of education with which I am connected. That from the beginning was the representative of piety and learning. The first two Presidents were distinguished particularly for their advocacy of religious and moral liberty, and for their zeal in the diffusion of knowledge for the benefit of all the learned professions. Those first Presidents in their own persons illustrated the excellence of the doctrines they proclaimed, themselves the best specimens both of pulpit eloquence and also of that kind of education which befits men to exert a salutary influence upon society.

I remember furthermore on this occasion that the college actually went into operation the very year that this town was incorporated, although we had our centennial one year ago, dating it from the first meeting of the corporation; so that in a certain sense we may be looked upon in connection with the town as two sister manufacturing establishments. I will not attempt to describe the quality of the manufacture in either establishment. There is one disadvantage, however, under which we labor, and that is, that while you can select and purchase such materials as you choose, we are obliged to take such as are sent to us, and make the best of them.

Religion, Education, Industry; these are associated with this occasion. They are the foundation of the success and power and dominion of the State. To my mind it is a happy combination;—Religion, first and chief; Education, its hand-maid and subject, to minister to all the wants of society; and Industry, without which Education fails of its practical object.

And never in the history of this country has the importance of these three qualities been more prominent and more clearly observable than at the present moment. If we have been taught any lesson by the sad scenes through which we have passed during the last four years, it is in the first place that all national prosperity must be founded on sure moral and religious principle,—that we cannot depend upon anything short of a *religious* foundation for the political fabric; and equally has it been demonstrated that intelligence, under the influence of religious sentiment, is the great power to act upon matter and upon mind. And in the struggles that have been in progress for the last four years, in how many instances have we

looked with delight to see the achievements of mind,—to see how vastly superior the intellect is to the mere accumulation of physical strength. We have had mighty physical forces wasted for want of directive energy. We have expended treasure and blood beyond what we can estimate, for want of mind sufficient in grasp and power to control the vast machinery we have put in operation. But, thank God, we were not to remain in this humiliating position. God put before us men who had intellectual power and could wield the mighty forces we had called into being. We to day see the happy results.

And the mechanical ingenuity and industry of our people is that which has distinguished the New England States during this war. We have met the boldness and dash of the south, and found that they would not bear a moment's comparison with the ingenuity, energy and practical intelligence which can make things work effectually when they are put into the hands of men trained to New England principles, New England habits and New England ideas. We admit that the northwest has shown magnificent ability both in the command of forces and in the executing of the great achievements which have distinguished them in the war, but still we look to the New England army, as a whole, for an amount of power, distributed through all the ranks, unequalled, so far as ingenuity and intellect are concerned, by anything to be found on the continent.

And now, I ask, what is the office which we in this small State—this little angle of a vast continent—have to perform? What is the mission of New England? I answer. It lies in these three words—Religion, Education, Industry. Carry these sacred three all the way to the Gulf of Mexico; carry them all the way to the Pacific, and let them shed their benign influence on the isles beyond. If there is salvation for this country, it is to come through these means, and no other. There never was a brighter era for an inhabitant of the New England States to live in than the present. There never was a nobler opportunity for the genius of New England character to infuse itself into all the institutions of the land, than at this time; and the appeal made to young men to know their own mission, which is to diffuse these sentiments all over the land, is scarcely less sacred than that for missionary enterprise to give the gospel to the nations of the earth.

The sentiment which lies nearest my heart is the mission we owe to the country, beautifully illustrated in more than one of its aspects in the history of your town, by such men as have commenced and guided the enterprise of this place, men who have started the manufacturing interests of Pawtucket, men who have shown such bravery by land and sea, men who,

in every emergency, have stood up and shown their loyalty to the State and the nation. I think we shall not always need to be told of the fact, although it will be of interest, that the State of Rhode Island is situated near to Pawtucket. I think the influence of town and State will expand itself to a larger sphere. The ideas that go forth from the history of this town are the ideas we wish to spread all over the land. I close with these three single words—Religion, Education, Industry.

MR. BRADLEY. We have paid our first respects to Religion and Education ; and I think every New England man will see the justness of the reverend speaker's claim that the diffusion of these ideas constitutes our mission as a people. He has complimented our State, as well he might, upon being one of those workshops or hives of Industry which unite this last with Religion and Education. Our little State,—is she not, in her industry and energy, like that statue of Hercules, which, only a cubit high, was so perfect in its proportions as to give a better idea of muscular vigor than the Colossus? Our little State is represented here by one of her chief magistrates, than whom none is more versed in historic lore, none more fit to occupy a seat upon the Bench where Justice sits serene and impartial. I introduce Judge Brayton.

Justice Brayton spoke as follows :

REMARKS OF JUSTICE BRAYTON.

My business is not to make addresses, but to weigh arguments and decide causes. I, of all men, should least be called upon for such a speech as would entertain this assembly.

But since I am called upon, and since I do know something of the history of this State, I will refer for an instant to that history. I will not detain you many minutes. We have been called upon for the last four years to consider something of government : What is government ? who are to be governed ? and who has the right to govern ? This has been one of the grounds of this great contest, whether these southern States had a right to secede from this young government, or what is there that binds a man under his government ? Now I refer to this matter simply because it is connected, and materially connected, with the very early history of this colony. The first planter here was a man who was driven away by the intolerance of a government. There grew up a necessity with those who went with him to have some sort of a government. They formed a union among themselves by voluntary association, and made experiment of that as a government. It was not long before they quarreled among themselves, and the experiment failed. Not many years after this there was a

new settlement formed. The settlers came from a similar quarter of the country, and for similar reasons. Not being allowed to remain where they were, they sought a new home three thousand miles from the sovereign power which thrust them forth. One portion of them were merchants. Another were farmers. They went on well for a year, and then they had a difficulty. There was a secession and afterwards a re-union. But it was not so perfect but that an individual could resist the power of the government. Now for a series of years this has involved the question, "In what does government consist?" We have gone through all the phases; and it was in this State that liberty was cradled. This State was able to resist all encroachments, maintain its stand, and make a government. After the formation of this government there came hither an individual of whom much has been said, and who said that the government at Portsmouth was no legitimate government; that the people were subjects of the crown of England, and until they received authority from it they had no government. There was a difficulty, and he was banished from that State. He came to Providence, and they refused to admit him there. They denied the validity of any government but that of Providence. They said they might get along by voluntary agreement, and if they got into difficulty they could submit it to arbitration. They did so, and said there was no power aside from that agreement for one man to bind another. He claimed that they must have the authority of the crown or sovereign power to which they were subject, in order to form an association to exercise the powers of government,—the power to issue judgment, pass a decree and carry it into execution;—then every man would be bound by it, and no man have the right to secede.

Now he went on and formed an association. They acted upon that principle. They did not attempt to exercise the powers of government until they had received a charter from the sovereign of the mother country and from its Parliament. From that time they went on, and this man whom they charged with being so turbulent and opposed to all government, sat down as quietly as any individual even under the government of Massachusetts.

Now look at these phases which we have gone through. They came and established a government, but not until they had received power from an authorized source. They felt that they were bound from all considerations to pay deference to the sovereign power. And I may say that this is the principle which they have wrought out. It was wrought out here through all these phases from necessity. And that principle must operate, and is operating now. It is a principle that must be established throughout this Union if it is a Union at all. That is all that I intended to say.

MR. BRADLEY. The Judge has spoken of the State laws and of government. There is a section of the State which gives name, indeed, to the whole of it, which, through one of its citizens, (not personally present, however,) has sent us its courteous greeting. This section I often heard your late colleague, Judge Bullock, apostrophize in the language of his favorite poet and philosopher, Coleridge :

“O rare and beauteous island! thou hast been  
My sole and most adorable temple.”

That great man, historian, philosopher and poet, loved that island almost to idolatry, as did that philosopher of whom Pope spoke as possessed of every virtue under heaven, the founder of colleges, libraries and churches, who wrote the immortal prophecy :

“Westward the star of empire takes its way.  
\* \* \* \* \*  
Time's noblest offspring is the last.”

Well might Berkeley, and men of culture and leisure and genius, choose their homes upon that verdant isle, whose climate is made so genial by the influence of that stream which comes up from the tropics, laden with balmy fragrance

“From the spicy shore  
Of Araby the blest.”

We are remembered kindly and courteously by that distinguished gentleman who has shared your favor, (though the breath of popular favor is always unstable.) I will read a letter from the learned author of Treatises on International Law, the Hon. William Beach Lawrence of Newport.

[The letter having been mislaid, it is necessarily omitted in this report.]

MR. BRADLEY. We have among us a distinguished guest who has acquired fame and fortune in other States, although he is proud to date his nativity from this town. I will introduce to you Mr. Moses Pierce, now of Norwich, Conn., but formerly one of our own citizens.

Mr. Pierce spoke as follows :

#### REMARKS OF MOSES PIERCE, ESQ.

*Mr. President*—During the rebellion which has just been put down, I have looked with pride upon what my native State has done in the raising of men, and upon their heroic action in battle. And I have had an especial eye upon this town, where I first drew breath, and where I spent some seventeen years of my early life. But I cannot but think at this moment that you must be largely indebted to my old friend, the chairman of your committee, for your success in raising recruits, if, indeed, he took the same

advantage of them which he did of me in making his application to me to be present here, while I was in the church, completely absorbed in the celebration, without one idea of making a speech; for I graduated at the old red school-house, near this spot, where even the sunlight of Brown did not reach in those days.

My memory has been busy since I have been here with scenes connected with this place forty or fifty years ago. I remember the village as it was then. I see venerable men around me who were then just in the vigor of manhood. And I remember those who have passed away—many of them the companions of my youth. Some forty years ago this very month I stood on Bunker Hill among that innumerable throng, and saw upon that platform two hundred of the ancient and honorable and brave men of the Revolution, surrounding an orator whose eloquence on that day has seldom been excelled. I saw there the bright, particular star of that constellation of worthies, Lafayette, and by his side sat Stephen Olney, a citizen of North Providence at that time; and I remember the scene in the Court House yard at Providence, to which the orator referred this morning. I saw Lafayette embrace that honored man of North Providence in friendship begun at the battle of Brandywine, and cemented at the battle of Yorktown. They were brothers in arms. Those men have all passed away. Not one of all those who stood upon that platform among those Revolutionary worthies is now in life.

I remember venerable citizens of this town at that period. My memory runs back to the time when Oziel Wilkinson was the nine o'clock of this village. Many a time have I played with the companions of my boyhood between those elm trees that stood in front of that dwelling, and when nine o'clock came, Oziel Wilkinson came to the door, saying, "Jeems, Jeems, does thee know it is nine o'clock?" That was the signal for us boys to find our homes. I remember Jeremiah Jenks, Moses Jenks and Stephen Jenks. Those were the old men of the place. Abraham and Isaac Wilkinson, Thomas Steere, Nathaniel Walker, and many others I could name, were just in the prime of life—some of them just passing out of the active business period. I remember the industrious habits of this community, for this place was one of the workshops and bee-hives of this country, to which the orator alluded. It was required that all the cotton should be carried home in a hand-cart to be whipped. You would continually see it carried along the streets in hand-carts, that the seeds might be whipped out of it, to fit it for manufacturing purposes.

I am not going to detain you with these reminiscences, but will tell you a fish story. I have not alluded to Timothy Greene, who was one of the

active men of the days of my earliest recollection, and with whom my father found a home when he came here. Timothy Greene had been born and brought up on the shores of Narragansett Bay, where he had more experience in digging Chippewanoxsett clams than he had in that ancient way of fishing in the winter time, (kept up, I believe, to this day,) by means of a scoop-net through holes cut in the ice. I used to take great delight in this sport. Many a time have I skated to Brown's Bridge and back again, stopping at Swan Point, Bucklin's Island, and every fishing ground around it, to see how they got along fishing. Some time after Timothy Greene came here he desired to go fishing in the winter. Stephen Jenks and Daniel Wilkinson concluded also that they would go down and have a little fishing on the ice. They took scoop-nets, and, like the disciples of old, toiled all the night and caught nothing. Coming home near morning, (the weather being so severe that ice formed up to the rear of Pardon Jenks's grist mill,) they landed in an old coal yard near Stephen Jenks's shop. Here Timothy put his net through an opening in the ice, and drew it up heavy with fish. But instead of getting bass, the kind generally caught, he caught the small perch, which were so very small that a great many slipped through the meshes of the net and hung down from the outside of it. Timothy, excited by his unexpected success, exclaimed, "Did you ever know anything equal to this? The fish are so glad to get out of this icy cold water that those who cannot get into the net take hold of the outside of it with their teeth."

MR. BRADLEY. I would like to inquire of the gentleman whether the story is an authentic one which is told of Col. Stephen Olney, that when in the army his regiment was disordered somewhat, and Washington said to him, "Your regiment gives me more trouble than any other in the army," and that the Colonel rejoined, "That, sir, is precisely what the enemy say."

MR. PIERCE. I cannot say of my own knowledge.

Doct. CHARLES F. MANCHESTER read the following regular toasts :

*Our Town*—Though five score years of age, it is still fresh and vigorous, energetic and enterprising, and we can with reason and confidence predict that its record for the succeeding hundred years will be as pregnant with themes for eulogy in another centennial address, as we have to-day found to be its record for the century which is past.

The President called upon Hon. Thomas Davis.

#### REMARKS OF HON. THOMAS DAVIS.

I was thinking, Mr. President, as you called upon the gentlemen who preceded me, that I could not help wishing that I possessed the fine classical taste with which you accompanied each introduction. I always feel a

regret when speaking that it was not my fortune to derive all the benefits which might have accrued from early education ; and therefore I fail to speak elegantly on occasions like the present, where, although the subjects under consideration are weighty, they do not peculiarly stir the mind like contest or debate.

It is the condition of no inconsiderable number of the States, cities and towns of our country to have subjects connected with their history which seem to single them out as something distinguished and superior. We hear on almost all public occasions of the services of States or towns or cities. Perhaps it is a proper feeling. Certainly we are bound to look over the history of the past, and derive encouragement and impulse from contemplating the labors and conduct of those who have gone before us, and prepared the condition of things which we now find to exist. But it seems to me that this town has peculiar claims for considerations of this kind. It seems to me that no locality of equal extent has a more marked history. It undoubtedly owes this in some measure to the fact that a stream poured forth its waters here, and made a power which enabled men to overlook the ground and see where they could contribute to their own wealth. Doubtless this was the original reason why this became a great center of business. If we who are here, fellow-citizens, if we can carry our minds back a hundred years, and see what progress has been made in that period, we may well feel astonished, and ask ourselves if another century that is to come can accomplish more for the welfare of the human race. Within the lifetime of most of us the whole condition of society has been changed by the inventive genius of man. Nearly all of us recollect the first railroad that ever ran here. We recollect the introduction of steam and of telegraphs, and what a revolution they have made in the social system. We cannot calculate their effects. The worthy President of Brown University spoke of Religion, Education and Industry—three matters of great moment ; great each in its own sphere. But how little progress either could make without the aid of the other. Even in regard to religion ; though a man might individually be a christian,—and that is a great deal,—yet the only way christianity can prevail in the world is by marching side by side with industry and science—physical science ; and I may say, without presumption, that it appears to me that the whole christian world has thus far made only failures in its attempts on heathenism, because it did not carry with it our industrial modes and scientific improvements.

In that spirit we are here to-day to take in the whole range of these matters, and give no one of them undue importance. As religion is potent in its place, it derives its power to be so as much from the mechanic arts

and from science as it does from the purity of its principles. I wish to detract nothing from these. I believe the utterances made by Christ to be all that can be uttered of the Divine. But they do not comprehend the whole of the relations of man to the universe and to the God who created the universe. It is only by developing the whole of these matters that we can know anything about what either of them is in its ultimate results.

Well, sir, we are here to-day. But if we could cast our eyes forward and contemplate the century which is to come, what changes would we behold. Here are the young about us. How few of them will remain when half a century shall have passed. There will a few be gathered together on the semi-centennial. And the great aspiration of us all is, that when we shall pass off this stage we may comprehend something of the progress we have witnessed here. This is, indeed, our highest aspiration, that these minds given us by our Creator may be continued in their powers, and expand to the capacity to comprehend in its progress all that belongs to our earthly existence of that which is beyond,—of which we scarcely have an apprehension now,—and of the vast system in which we live. If, indeed, we could be assured this day that we should comprehend these things, we should go home with lighter hearts, and with a more elevated view of society and of man. And notwithstanding all that has been said about this matter, we still doubt. We have not full faith to believe, or our lives would give higher exhibitions of the ends for which we were created. But it is something even in a moment to feel that such things may be; that this our festivity may be in harmony with those higher ideas that elevate our minds and alone make existence of value.

I do not know, sir, that I am prepared to enlarge on this subject of industry. I have seen something of the progress of the mechanic arts in Rhode Island, although entirely disconnected from this village. Forty years ago—certainly a long period in life—I commenced mechanical labor in a jeweller's shop, and I have seen every step in the progress of that business to this hour, and can say that it is a perfect wonder to comprehend it. I may not be able to give it in detail. It would make, in itself, a little history, which a person having the taste and ability might write. Now all the work that was once performed by the hands of the younger apprentices is done by machinery. The hardest work was rolling down the stock in a little mill, which was before done by boys. It is now done by steam power. A hundred appliances of machinery all bring out the most beautiful structures in connection with that business. Indeed, in our own city has been invented a machine for the manufacture of articles of jewelry in chains, which is now running in Europe. It has never been

equalled by any invention for this purpose. I presume the same remark applies to the mechanic arts generally, and to those branches of them prosecuted in Pawtucket, where the same genius has been expended with the same happy results.

And, sir, in the midst of all this progress we have sometimes been alarmed at the magnitude of the great corporations that have grown up. I confess, Mr. President, that I sometimes have entertained the idea that they might be unfavorable to the freedom of men. I was somewhat later, perhaps, in my ideas of democracy, or, rather, I did not apply to them the right principles. But it now seems to me, fellow-citizens, that all these great corporations are working out for the masses of mankind a favorable result. Instead of being in the hands of one man, the artisans will, by degrees, become participants in the results of their labor. They can be owners of the stock. They are distributed among the masses. They can own little or much, and derive a proportion of the profit of what they produce. I could not but reflect during the last session of the Legislature, where great numbers applied for acts of incorporation, (some for purposes beyond this State, but a great proportion for purposes within it,) that all these acts were tending to contribute to the equalization of property rather than to destroy it. I think I can clearly see a tendency in these toward this result. I cannot but believe that all these are to become means of distributing wealth, and raising up the masses, and giving them an interest, though it may be a small one, in every great corporation. If industrious and prudent, they may oftener become owners in this position of affairs, than if left to combat with capital in the hands of a single person. And so of all our other great improvements which have resulted from the progress of physical science. Our railroads, and especially our new horse railroads, are conferring great benefits on the mass of our citizens. We struggle against them at first, but soon learn to recognize their utility, and value them accordingly.

During the oration to-day, when the orator was speaking of the opposition made to the dams across the river on the ground that they interfered with the passage of fish, I was reminded of an incident related to me by Hon. Lemuel Angell, a Senator from this town in a former Legislature ten or fifteen years ago, but whom I do not see here to-day. He stated to me that when the Legislature of Rhode Island was in session—it may be forty years ago—about the time the first steamer came up our bay—the Senate passed an act prohibiting steamers coming into Rhode Island waters, on the ground that they would disturb the fish. I do not think the bill ever extended to the other house. I never heard anything more

of it. But it showed the spirit which prevailed. The Senate was a small body, and probably had not many popular ideas, although men of eminent ability as politicians. But, Mr. President; I have spoken long enough, and thanking you for your attention, will quietly sit down.

MR. BRADLEY. My neighbor and friend who has just taken his seat will pardon me for adding a word as to the progress made in machinery. A gentleman engaged in the cotton manufacture told me that from the time he first entered a cotton mill up to the present day, the cost of producing a yard of cotton had been decreased just sixteen times. One person can now produce as much cotton, through the aid of improved machinery, as sixteen persons could have done when he first entered a cotton mill.

Through this inventive faculty of the mind, great burdens are to be lifted from the people of this country. When in Europe I was astonished at the vast difference in readiness of perception in regard to the understanding of machinery between European nations and our own. I think, although it is said that the new continent produces the best specimens of vegetable growth, and the old world the finest specimens of the human kingdom, that the American mind is more akin to those finer powers of nature, electricity and magnetism, and evinces more of the faculties of discovery and imagination. Perhaps in no place on this continent has this been more illustrated than here. My friend knows that in hunting up patent cases, we can find the earliest discoveries about here.

The second regular toast was—

*The Orator of the Day*—With the skill of an artist has he daguerreotyped to our view the men and transactions of one hundred years, so that we and those who come after us and read the history, may say with pride, such were our fathers and the works of their hands.

Rev. Mr. Goodrich was called upon to respond, and spoke as follows :

REMARKS OF REV. MR. GOODRICH.

The only speech I ought to make, Mr. President, would be an apology to our friends for taxing their patience so long during the meeting. I wish to say here, that what little I have been able to do shows me the necessity that a great deal more should be done. In conversation with Rev. Dr. Benedict a while ago, he told me that some interesting reminiscences that he had written years since were to be revised and put in shape. I hope the worthy Doctor will be spared to us a great many years. I hope some of his friends will suggest to him that he should do this work soon, that we may have this interesting local history preserved.

Our worthy Dr. Taft has also informed me that he was preparing reminiscences of his time. I trust he will be led to do that work soon, that a

great deal of interesting matter relative to the local history of this region may be preserved.

Having gone out of the room oppressed with the heat, I came in as our worthy President was speaking of Religion, Education and Industry. It is unnecessary that I speak any more about industry in Pawtucket. It would be bringing coals to Newcastle. It is not unlikely that as we have taken such a start, this will continue to be a thriving industrial center.

I want to speak a word about education. Public education and common schools unhappily are a comparatively recent invention in Rhode Island, though to the credit of Providence be it said, and to the credit of Moses Brown in particular, that it was not so with all parts of the State; for he long strove to popularize that system, and complained that it was not the men of wealth whose children attended the common schools upon whom the tax must bear the hardest, but upon the poorest. We have had a great many illustrations of that fact in other places. It is not enough for us in our country to depend on our higher institutions. They have their worth. But for all the money that has ever been invested in them, for all the talent concentrated there, look at Virginia. At the outbreak of this rebellion she had six or eight colleges, well officered—their course of study equal to that of the average northern colleges. She had in her larger colleges eight hundred youth instructed—more than Harvard had, more than Brown has; and yet Virginia went staggering into the rebellion, dragged in by those seeking only to enforce the will of a corrupt oligarchy. We look at Virginia with pity to-day.

Let us have collegiate education; let the higher institutions of learning be maintained; but let common schools have a full share of our interest and our liberality.

I recollect a story that President Felton used to relate with considerable glee, when I was residing at Cambridge. He happened to be at the time on the school committee, as were several of the professors at Harvard University. It was a favorite idea with the President that all education should be free—that colleges should speedily be made free to all who saw fit to attend. It was his desire, and that of the professors referred to, to make the common schools of the city of Cambridge so good that no private institutions could live; and they pretty well succeeded. The story was of some lads whom he happened to hear conversing together, and who had been in the habit of going to private schools, but had then just commenced attending the public schools. One of the lads said to his fellow, “I say, Bill, these common schools are capital institutions; they take the starch out of a fellow finely.” I hope we shall have good common schools that will take the starch out of all that need to be subjected to such a process.

Another fact I would call attention to in this connection. Education is not finished when a boy or girl leaves the school. It is but just begun.

Another important institution is a good public library. I do not mean private affairs. We have one of those here in this village. I cannot get into it. I have not the money to invest in it. It is the property of a private corporation. It is a good institution for those that have a share in it. I wish it were a public institution, in the largest sense of the term. The only practical application I want to make of that thought is this: George Peabody caused his name to be remembered in his native town, not by building a monument, but by establishing a library. South Danvers, small as she is, is glorious in her public libraries. Another absent son of Boston laid the foundation of its noble public library. Is there not some absent son of this town, blessed with the means, who wants to make his own neighbors' children, and their children's children down to the latest generation, recollect him lovingly? Let him endow a public library. Perhaps it is not worth while to say there is an immense amount of wealth in this little region. Let that wealth be duly consecrated to the work of spreading intelligence among the people, and we will have a public library.

About this matter of religion. I suppose there has been a great deal of wrangling among sects, and that there is a great deal at the present time. Mere utilitarians may consider this unnecessary. In reading the history of Rhode Island, one of the incidents that stirred me most was to read of Roger Williams's efforts to maintain in this community perfect freedom of conscience; and yet he was not indifferent to theoretical views. When he learned that George Fox was down in Newport creating a sensation and disseminating views which he considered prejudicial, he proposed a friendly discussion, and rowed down to that city in a boat, (this was before the day of steamboats,) reaching there about midnight, commencing his discussion the next day, and continuing it three days. He was at that time over 73 years of age. I honor him for that, and should if it had been John Calvin or John Murray he was discussing with. My religious convictions are dearer to me than all others. But I honor my Baptist, Methodist, Episcopal, Congregational brethren, and those of every other denomination, for fidelity; and I believe that it is for the advantage of every community that religious sentiment should be active, and that there should be religious institutions maintained in all vigor and vitality. I recollect a remark of Chief Justice Parsons when he resided in Newburyport. There was at one time a good deal of religious excitement in that place, and a friend residing in Salem was rather condoling with the Chief Justice where there was so much agitation. "Come up and live in Salem," said he, "where

we don't have any quarrels about religion." "There is but one difference," replied the Chief Justice, "between us at Newburyport and you at Salem. You don't care anything about religion, and we do care enough about it to quarrel about it." If men won't work without a little stimulus, I would rather they would get up interest enough to quarrel a little intellectually; anything but apathy and indifference. I have read of a man who went to polished Athens some eighteen hundred years ago. He met the philosophers, Epicureans and Stoics, disputed in the Market Place, and spoke before the assembly of the Areopagus. But this people, with all their intellectual culture, were a very frivolous kind of people, and the major part of them, visitors and residents, cared nothing except to hear or tell some new thing. These are not the persons to make earnest, striving and successful men, either in initiating social improvements or in maintaining liberty, and the apostle gathered no church there.

MR. BRADLEY. I suppose, after the example we have had, we should all like to hear more from these clergymen who quarrel so much, as our brother has told us. The toast-master will read a sentiment to which the Rev. Mr. Ela is expected to respond.

The third regular toast was—

*The Town of North Providence*—The first place in the world to apply steam power for the purposes of navigation; the first place in America to spin cotton yarn by machinery; the first place in New England to establish Sunday Schools.

REMARKS OF REV. D. H. ELA.

I have been very much interested, Mr. President, in listening to the speeches I have heard this afternoon; so much so that I should like to carry them away without having them mixed up with others such as I can give. I hardly see how this toast can come specially within the province of the clergy. It occurred to me that if I were in a legislature or a deliberative assembly, I should ask that the question might be divided. It seems difficult to understand how the first steamboat, the first spinning jenny and the first Sunday School have any connection. I believe it is a principle of legislation that the different parts of a bill must be german to each other. The steamboat may have brought the first spinning jenny, but I do not know how the spinning jenny is cousin to the Sunday School, unless it be through the waterfall. Justice Brayton assents, and I shall therefore consider that we have the judgment of the Supreme Court that that opinion is correct.

There is a connection between these matters of scientific and industrial improvement and that interest which the Sunday School represents. It is

not an accident, Mr. President, that these things come together—that they are neighbors to each other in time and neighbors in locality. It is only a part of that great fact which we can see widely displayed in all the christian world,—that science has attended upon religion, and art has accompanied the advancement of morality. It is not an accident that God has put into the hands of christian nations the larger portion of the wealth of the world. It is not an accident that the telegraph, the printing press, steam power, and all the different departments of art and science, are in the hands of christian nations. It is not an accident, it seems to me, that commerce is mostly in the hands of christian nations. It is not an accident that the great gold deposits of the world, over which it seems as if God had placed His hand and covered them for ages and for generations, have been uncovered by Him to christian people, so that they have found the treasures here gathered, and may pour them forth in blessings on the world. It is not an accident that the great coal fields are under the control of christian civilization. It is not an accident that a christian nation has lately “struck oil.” These things have a purpose in the great providence of God. They are for the blessing of the nations. They are for the improvement of humanity. God has given them to His people for a great and glorious purpose. And thus right here, in the history of this town, we have the Sunday School growing up in the midst of the industry and business of a manufacturing community. This is not an accident. What could have been done without the influences of religion? How could the good order of society have been maintained? How could civilization have been advanced? How could we have been prepared for these great times? How could we have remained firm in our contest for civil liberty without these great influences, without regard to something more than expediency and the considerations of political economy to keep us steady? We needed these mighty principles that God has blessed the land with, to steady us in these momentous revolutions through which we have passed. It is a significant fact that this Sunday School movement has taken such a hold of society in these latter times. This single institution, planting here its seeds of truth, has had a mighty influence in preparing us for the great work which God has given us to do. I see, then, more clearly than at first, the connection between these important matters and our history; but I will not detain you longer.

MR. BRADLEY. We had expected the presence of His Excellency the Governor of the State, but he is unavoidably detained, and has sent the following letter:

## LETTER FROM GOV. SMITH.

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND, EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT, }  
PROVIDENCE, June 23, 1865. }

GENTLEMEN,—His Excellency Gov. Smith desires me to acknowledge the receipt of your invitation to attend the celebration of the centennial anniversary of the town of North Providence, and to express to you his regrets that several pressing engagements for the day will make it impossible for him to be present on the above occasion.

Assuring you of His Excellency's congratulations upon the rapid advancement of your town, and upon the high position which it has attained, from its wealth and manufactures,

I am, gentlemen, with great respect,

Your very obedient servant,

CHARLES E. BAILEY,

Col. and Priv. Sec'y.

To D. Wilkinson, William F. Sayles, Obadiah Brown, etc.

The fourth regular toast was—

*Our Mother, the City of Providence*—Though long separated from her, we are not estranged; and though living in a more northern clime, our hearts are sufficiently warm to welcome her representatives here to-day.

MR. BRADLEY. It was expected that this would be responded to by His Honor Mayor Doyle, who is absent. He has, however, sent the following letter :

## LETTER FROM MAYOR DOYLE.

MAYOR'S OFFICE,  
CITY OF PROVIDENCE, June 23, 1865. }

GENTLEMEN,—Your polite invitation to participate in the festivities of the centennial celebration of North Providence was handed to me by the chairman of your committee.

I regret that my recent indisposition, from which I have not fully recovered, together with a press of official duties upon the day appointed, will prevent me from being with you.

Permit me, however, to express my gratification at the prosperity which the town has attained, and at the influence she exerts in the State.

As she increases in population and wealth, and as her agricultural and manufacturing interests are developed, so her prosperity and influence must also continue to increase.

I sincerely hope that her past progress is the harbinger of future greatness, and that the pleasant and harmonious relations existing between this

city and her daughter may never be broken, but be strengthened with each passing year.

Thanking you for the courtesy which prompted the invitation,

I remain, respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

THOMAS A. DOYLE, Mayor.

To D. Wilkinson, William F. Sayles, Obadiah Brown, etc.

The next regular toast was—

*Our Predecessors in the Building up of North Providence*—Gladly would we welcome them to this festive board, and thank them for their labors and sacrifices in the past; but their race is run, and their goal, we trust, is won; and we can do no more than pay this tribute to their memory in silence.

To this there was no response.

The next regular toast was—

*Samuel Slater and David Wilkinson*—Two names intimately connected with the history of the Pawtucket part of North Providence. By their genius and perseverance they left their impress upon the place, but while the former was rewarded for his labors, and ended his days where lie had been useful and was appreciated, the latter was forced by misfortune to leave in his old age, and go among strangers to “see if he could earn his own living.”

Rev. David Benedict, D. D., made the following response on invitation from the President to relate some portion of the early history of the town :

REMARKS OF REV. DR. BENEDICT.

*Mr. President*—It is a grateful spectacle to see so many people assembled to unite in celebrating this anniversary. Having had no previous notification, it cannot be expected that I should make much of a speech at this time. I was pleased with the address of the Rev. Dr. Sears. It comprises the sum and substance of human economy. As a citizen and *quasi* native of this State, I feel a superior interest in its concerns. I have resided here now just about sixty-one years; that is, I came here in the summer of 1804. I am thinking how many there are here now that have resided within the boundaries of North Providence for that length of time—my neighbor Capt. Dexter, perhaps, and a very few others. I have, for a great length of years, in addition to my other professional pursuits—my historical pursuits of a denominational character, and my general pursuits of all objects suitable for man to pursue—been attending to the collection of items and reminiscences pertaining to the history of this State and vicinity. A number of them have been touched upon in the discourse to which you this morning listened. Some that I hinted to my friend, the orator, he had not time to introduce. I am still in pursuit of such items, and desire, in the first place, to get an account of who were the first settlers

here when the aborigines were the sole inhabitants—to get an account of the very first shanty or log cabin built within this region. Only a little while ago my friend, Rev. Dr. Taft, asked me if Joseph Jenks, Senior, was *bona fide* the first white man that came and resided about Pawtucket falls. I replied that it had always been my general impression that he was ; I had not studied into the subject, but would do so. I told my friend, Rev. Mr. Goodrich, all I could say about the matter. The probability is that some people settled here before Joseph Jenks, Senior, built his little shanty. The old stone chimney house was moved farther up the river because they wanted to run the street by the river side. It stood formerly just below the Town Clerk's office,—just about where the street now is. It was moved after Joseph Jenks died.

Well, now as to the moral character of the vicinity. It has been greatly celebrated for sectarian peculiarities during the whole period of my own life—two generations of men, as they are ordinarily estimated. I have been accustomed to hear sneering remarks respecting the want of a certain something found in other sects, in the State of Rhode Island. It was a maxim long ago that any man who had lost his religion and wanted to find it, should go into the State of Rhode Island, where there was a flood of religions of all sorts. There is something in this. In early times the neighboring States were downright intolerant. There is no use in mincing the matter. *Culpa temporum*, it was the fault of the times. There were many people persecuted for want of orthodox opinions. Some were loose in their tenets, others were very conscientious and sincere. The conscientious part went to Rhode Island. The loose and irreverent part also fled there and found shelter. It was engraven on the first bell of the old Providence Meeting House, as you, perhaps, remember :

“For freedom of conscience the town was first planted;  
Persuasion, not force, was used by the people;  
This church is the oldest, and has not recanted,  
Enjoying and granting bell, temple and steeple.”

I suppose this was intended to be a hit, not only at the neighboring province, but was also an allusion to Old England, where dissenters could not have steeples on their houses of worship.

There is another point connected with the history of Rhode Island. Callender, in his centenary discourse, delivered one hundred years after Rhode Island was settled, says : “There is an advantage in having religion established by law, in having houses of worship established and maintained without the trouble of voluntary collections. But there is a growth of formality and a loss of spirituality which want of religious freedom particularly superinduces.”

But notwithstanding all the imperfections of old Rhode Island, I feel attached to her and cannot help it.

The village of Pawtucket, what was it when I came here sixty years ago? Our orator to-day has given some description of it. I believe there were but fifty houses within half a mile of the bridge, on both sides of the river. It was a steady population—a pretty regular population—until ship-building came in and brought a set of hands rather wanting in stability. Afterwards cotton mills came in, and employers were obliged to pick up hands from all quarters. It was exceedingly uncomfortable, and this class of people were very unpopular. And even against Mr. Slater—would you think it of a man so famous?—there was a prejudice because he was an Englishman and a foreigner. This lasted some time, and attached to everything pertaining to cotton manufacturing. Josiah Wilkinson did not want Mr. Slater to form a connection with his daughter. When the two latter were in conversation one evening, Josiah abruptly said, “Hannah, it is time for thee to go to bed.” That showed the prejudice he had against Mr. Slater, and that he did not want his daughter to continue the conversation. The manufacturers were obliged to pick up all sorts of help in every place, from Dan to Beersheba. They could get no other than such as they did. People considered the place a very nest of corruption and disorder, with a helter-skelter population. They compared it to “forty live crabs in a bucket.”

Mr. Pierce has noted a singular peculiarity in the fact that they had to pick cotton by hand—the long staple cotton. In my parochial visits I would often find the women each with a basket of cotton waste before them, and they got as much for picking the waste as the cotton has been sold for ordinarily before the war.

I cannot go into details concerning the Sunday School cause. Capt. Dexter and myself disagree a little about dates. I was not present at the formation of the first Sunday School. I came to the place a short time afterwards. I became chief manager of the Sunday School. I have subscription papers in my possession on which cotton mill owners were the only subscribers to the funds for procuring preachers, teachers, books, and everything that was required.

**MR. BRADLEY.** There is one theme which, at every festival gathering, is left to the last. That must be the worthiest and the best. And I shall call upon the most acceptable person, namely, the bachelor clergyman, to answer to the last regular toast, which is—

*The Ladies*—While we accord to man due praise for his enterprise and labors, we do not forget that woman, by her virtues and graces, her affections and sacrifices, her restraining influences and wholesome admonitions, contributes her full share to those features of society and those enterprises most acceptable to the Creator and His creatures.

I will call upon Mr. Spaulding to respond.

REMARKS OF MR. C. H. SPAULDING.

*Mr. President*—I hardly know wherein consists the peculiar sacredness of this subject that a clergyman should be called upon to speak in reference to it. It was with great reluctance that I consented to do so. I think, perhaps, that I could have found greater inspiration at an earlier hour than this. But there is some left, surely.

We, to-day, are celebrating the one hundredth anniversary of this town. We have seen that there was a link which allied the town to the nation and to the commonwealth. It becomes me now to say that there is another step in this gradation—an ultimate point which is strongly allied to the town, through the town to the commonwealth, and through the commonwealth to the nation. Need I say that that ultimate point is the home where is felt the influence of the christian mother and of the christian system. I read before me to-day in a most beautiful prophecy of the future what is to proceed from the home; for I see “Louisiana” (or the lady bearing the name of that State) beside “Maine.” I see, singularly enough, “Rhode Island” between “Florida” and “Tennessee.” I see all these States linked together to-day in this beautiful picture. And what is the influence that is to effect this? It is the influence of christian mothers and of christian sisters. Through the influence of these there is to be brought about a beautiful fulfilment of the prophecy, “Mercy and Truth have met together; Righteousness and Peace have kissed each other.”

I will mention two incidents which will illustrate the point. We have no more beautiful picture in our American history than that of our immortal Washington, about to depart from his home to the high and responsible offices which awaited him, receiving the benediction of a christian mother. I recollect when a lad hearing the orator of the day on some great festive occasion make the statement: “This George Washington had a good mother, and that was the secret of his greatness.” And so we may say that there is a great deal of unwritten and unrecorded heroism which proceeds from the home where a mother has sent forth to the war, with a “God bless you, my son,” those who have fought and suffered for us, yea, died for us; and we to-day, through their unwritten heroism, are enjoying the fruits of peace, which we trust will be as lasting as time.

There is one other incident to which I will allude, and that is the letter which was written to Mrs. Lincoln by Queen Victoria of England. Ever since the death of Prince Albert, Queen Victoria has presented one of the most beautiful spectacles of grief and sorrow which the world has known;

and who more fittingly than herself could have written a letter of condolence to Mrs. Lincoln in the hour of her great sorrow?

Yes, in the picture before me we read a beautiful prophecy of the future greatness of our country.

MR. BRADLEY. I am almost unwilling to say anything which shall disturb the picture in living canvass to which the speaker alludes. I would we might carry the memory of it with us when we leave this place. But I fear that it is nearly time to bring the exercises to a close. The pleasure we have had has been largely owing to the kindness of the gentlemen who have addressed you.

The following volunteer sentiment was given :

*The New Police Court of Pawtucket—Behold “a second Daniel come to judgment.”*

Responded to by Mr. Daniel Wilkinson as follows :

REMARKS OF MR. DANIEL WILKINSON.

There used to be a play among young folks when I went to see the girls called “cross questions and unlucky answers,” and I think this illustrates it exactly. I was notified that there was a sentiment to be read applying to me, but they would not tell me what it was. You may all take off your hats to me until the first day of July. The court will not be organized till then. After that, if any of these gentlemen, clergymen or laymen, are brought before me as Justice, I shall endeavor to administer to them according to their deserts, and treat them more fairly than I have been treated in this respect.

MR. BRADLEY. Is it your pleasure that we shall hear what remains to be heard from the lips of the beautiful and fair? If so, we will turn to them in silence.

“America” was then sung by a choir of young ladies, the Band accompanying them.

MR. BRADLEY. Let us close this celebration with the wish that the good old mother town will not wait another hundred years before she assembles her children under the roof-tree of the old homestead again.

## APPENDIX.

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In the preparation of the foregoing address, I have been haunted by the dread of making it too long. For this reason I have omitted many things, which, though interesting, seemed of minor consequence. Now that the final sentence is penned, I find that I could have used more space without rebuke. I therefore append, at the suggestion of some of our older citizens, the reminiscences of David Wilkinson. These have been previously published, but are not, perhaps, generally accessible. It has also seemed to me desirable to publish in a shape convenient for preservation a history of the various bridges built over the Pawtucket. This history was published in the Gazette and Chronicle of April 8th, 1864. M. G.

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### DAVID WILKINSON'S REMINISCENCES.

AUTUMN, 1846.

In April, 1776, Eleazer Smith, who had been at work for Jeremiah Wilkinson, Junior, a Quaker of Cumberland, came to my father's blacksmith shop, which was making scythes, in the town of Cumberland, Rhode Island, to make a machine to manufacture card teeth, for Daniel Anthony of Providence, who was going into the card making business. While at work, Smith told my father of Jeremiah Wilkinson's making card tacks of cold iron. In laying the strip of leather around the hand card, he lacked four large tacks to hold the corners in place, while driving the tacks around the outer edge. He took a plate of an old door lock off the floor, cut four points with shears, and made heads in the vice ; but afterwards made a steel bow with scores in it, and put it in the vice, and in that way made tacks.

I think in 1777 my father made a small pinch press, with different sized impressions, placed on an oak log, with a stirrup for the foot, and set me astraddle on the log, to heading nails, which were cut with common shears. He cut the points off of plates drawn by trip-hammer. This was the commencement, in the world, of making nails from cold iron.

I think about 1820 I went to Cumberland with Samuel Greene, my nephew, and purchased of Jeremiah Wilkinson the old shears with which he cut the first four nails. He was, I think, ninety years of age at that time. The shears were a pair of tailor's shears, with bows straightened out, and the blades cut off half the length. They were deposited with the Historical Society, in Providence, by Samuel Greene.

My father, Oziel Wilkinson, lived in the town of Smithfield, Rhode Island, in 1775, at the commencement of the war, and owned a blacksmith shop, with a hammer worked by water. It was here Eleazer Smith made the machine for Daniel Anthony. I was then about five years old, and my curiosity was so great to see the work going on, that my father set me on Mr. Smith's bench, to look on, while he worked. And at this time, seventy years afterwards, I could make a likeness of nearly every piece of that machine,—so durable are the first impressions on the mind of youth. After Smith had finished the machine, so as to make a perfect card tooth, he told the people in the shop that he could make a machine to make the tooth, prick the leather, and set the tooth, at one operation.

Jeremiah Wilkinson carried on the business of making hand cards for carding sheep's wool, and it being difficult to import wire, he drew the wire out by horse power.

In 1784 or '5 my father put the anchor shop in operation at Pawtucket falls, on the Blackstone river, in North Providence, Rhode Island.

About this time I heard of cotton yarn being made in or near East Greenwich, in which John Reynolds and James Macarris, who employed a Mr. Mackwire, or Maguire, to make yarn on a jenny, for which I forged and ground spindles. I made a small machine to grind with, which had a roller of wood to roll on the stone, which turned the spindle against the stone, and so ground the steel spindles perfectly. I heard of no machines for carding cotton.

About this time also, a number of gentlemen in the town of Providence commenced some machinery for working cotton. Andrew Dexter, merchant, the father of S. Newton Dexter of Orickany, Oneida county, New York; Aaron Mann, father of Samuel F. Mann of Providence; Lewis Peck, merchant; Daniel Anthony, and, I think, Moses Brown of Providence, were aiding in the work. My father was applied to, to make iron work for a machine for carding cotton, which was done by the help of a carpenter named Joshua Lindley, and a brass founder named Daniel Jackson, father of Samuel and John Jackson of Providence. The card circles, or rims, were made of wrought iron, as there was no furnace near. The card was put in operation in the Market House chamber, in Providence,

and was turned by a colored man named Prince Hopkins, who had lost one leg, and, I think, one arm, in Sullivan's expedition at Newport, a few years before. The cotton was taken from the card in rolls about eighteen inches long, and carried one mile from town to Moses Brown's, where it was made into roping by a young woman in Mr. Brown's employ named Amey Lawrence.

About this time, too, Daniel Anthony made a trip to Bridgewater, and returning said he had some parts of a machine called the Arkwright water frame, which was commenced by a European in the employ of Colonel Orr of Bridgewater, and given up, or the few parts thrown by. He soon had one under way in Providence, which was made and finished in Pawtucket, and put in operation there by Anthony's two sons, Joseph and Richard, assisted occasionally by two other sons, Daniel and William. The rollers were made of half inch wrought iron, with swells of brass cast on, and fluted with files. The bobbin which received the yarn from the spindle was made with a score in the bottom, to receive a cross cat-gut twine, with a tightening wooden thumb-screw, like a violin, to regulate the taking up;—which Mr. Slater performed in his first water frames, by making a wide flat bottom to the bobbin, set on a wooden cloth washer, to regulate the taking up, as the friction would increase by weight as the bobbin filled, and needed more friction. (Mr. Slater ran his first machinery by rope bands, for his carding machines, roping and drawing, as the use of belts was not then known in this country. The first leather belts I ever heard of were made by John Blackburn, when he was setting a mule in operation for Mr. Slater. Mr. Slater informed me there had been a new machine for making yarn got up in England, which was a mixture of the jack and jenny and the Arkwright water frame.)

I assisted the Anthonys in finishing and keeping in order their machine.

There being no cotton gins at the south, they (the Providence people above referred to) imported some of the cotton in seed, and picked it off by hand, which being in bad condition, and the machinery imperfect, they made some few tons of yarn, and laid the machinery by. Moses Brown bought the machinery, and advertised in New York, which brought Mr. Samuel Slater to Providence.

Mr. Slater came out with Moses Brown to my father's at Pawtucket, to commence an Arkwright water frame, and breaker, and two finishers, carding machines. I forged the iron work, and turned the rollers and spindles, in part. All the turning was done with hand tools, and by hand power, with crank wheels. When the card rims and wheels were wanting, I went with Slater to Mansfield, Massachusetts, to a furnace owned by a

French gentleman named Dauby, who came, I think, with Lafayette's army, who has a son and one daughter now living in Utica and Auburn. The card rims broke in cooling. Mr. Slater said the iron shrunk more than the English iron. I told him we would make a crooked arm, that would let the rim move round,—the arms being carried one way, and when the hub cooled would return, and leave the wheel not divided against itself,—which proves a remedy in all cases, if the arms are made the width the right way, to let the curve spring easy, with sufficient strength of iron. I told him cast iron broke more often by division in its own family, than by labor.

About the year 1786-7 my father bought the machinery for cutting iron screws,—called the fly screw, for pressing paper,—of Israel Wilkinson of Smithfield, the son of Israel who built the Hope furnace for the Browns and others,—and with the help of a Mr. Crabb, who was employed by the Browns, John, Joseph, Nicholas and Moses, in building the sperm candle works on what is now called India Point. They used a screw of cast iron, about seven inches in diameter, and five or six feet long, which was cut by setting it upright, with a wooden guide screw, which was connected with an iron socket, with a mortice to hold the cutter, which was fastened with an iron wedge.

After Wilkinson had finished the candle works, with Mr. Crabb, he put in operation works for making screws, in Smithfield, and cut in the same manner as the English plan, brought over by Mr. Crabb. The old man (old Israel Wilkinson) went to different furnaces in Massachusetts to mould his screws. There were no moulders who would undertake it. My father had once seen old Israel Wilkinson mould one screw, and, after he had bought these old tools of young Israel, as he was called, and at a time when he wanted some moulding done, he took me—then about fifteen years old—into his chaise and carried me to Hope furnace, about fourteen miles from Providence, in Scituate, to mould a paper mill screw, as they had no moulder at their furnace who would undertake to mould one. I had never seen a furnace in operation, or seen a thing moulded, in my life. I moulded three or four screws before I left for home. I stayed there about a month. The screws weighed about five hundred pounds each—were five inch top, with cross holes seven inches diameter, through a lantern head for a lever seven inches diameter. They were cast in dried-clay moulds, hooped and strapped with iron bands. I took the screws home to Pawtucket, and cut and finished them there. They were made for Hudson & Goodwin of New York, and Lazarus Beach of Danbury, Connecticut. We made many screws of wrought iron for clothiers' presses and oil mills,

but they were imperfect, and I told my father I wanted to make a machine to cut screws on centers, which would make them more perfect. He told me I might commence one. My father, in 1791, built a small air furnace, or reverberatory, for casting iron, in which were cast the first wing-gudgeons known in America, to our knowledge, for Samuel Slater's old factory.

On my way home from the Hope furnace I called at the ore bed in Cranston, and found Mr. Ormsbee (I think Elijah) of Providence repairing the large steam engine, which raised the water seventy-two feet from the bottom of the ore pits. The engine was made with the main cylinder open at the top, and the piston raised with a large balance lever, as the news of the cap on the cylinder by Bolton & Watt had not yet come to this country when that engine was built. Mr. Ormsbee told me he had been reading of a boat being put in operation by steam at the city of Philadelphia, and if I would go home with him and build the engine, he would build a steamboat. I went home and made my patterns, cast and bored the cylinder, and made the wrought iron work, and Ormsbee hired a large boat of John Brown, belonging to one of his large India ships—should think about twelve tons. I told him of two plans of paddles; one I called the flutter wheel, and the other the goose foot paddle. We made the goose foot, to open and shut with hinges, as the driving power could be much cheaper applied than the paddle wheel. After we had got the boat nearly done, Charles Robbins made a pair of paddle wheels, and attached them to a small skiff, and ran about with a crank, by hand power. After having the steamboat in operation, we exhibited it near Providence, between the two bridges; I think, while the bridges were being built. After our frolic was over, being short of funds, we hauled the boat up and gave it over.

About this time a young man called on me, and wished to see the boat, and remained a day or two examining all the works. He told me his name was Daniel French, from Connecticut. I never knew where he came from, nor where he went.

Some three or four years after we laid our boat by, I was at New York, and saw some work commenced at Fulton's Works, for steamboat shafts, and saw a small steamboat in North river, built by Col. John Stevens of Hoboken. I went over to his place, and saw his boring mill. I thought he was ahead of Fulton, as an inventor.

In the winter of 1814-15, hearing of a trial which was coming on before the Legislature of New Jersey, between Robert Fulton and Col. Ogden of New Jersey, I had the curiosity to attend—as I always thought it singular that the idea of the paddle-wheel should strike two persons so, at the

same time, at such a distance apart ; yet I knew so simple a thing might happen. I learned in Trenton that Fulton had said he made the draft of the wheel in London. The case in court was managed for Ogden by Hopkinson and Southard ; and for Fulton, by Emmet and Sampson. I, being a stranger there, was in the crowd to learn what I could. After the trial was over,—in company with Emmet, Sampson, Fulton, and others,—I took stage for New York ; and, in the midst of an extremely heavy snow storm, wallowed our way along as far as Jersey City, where we found all the houses full, and no mail had crossed to New York for two days. Fulton, Emmet and Sampson took a boat, with four oarsmen, and got over by crossing the cakes of floating ice, and launching the boat several times. The boat returned with General Brown and suite. The next boat took me, with several others. Not long after I arrived home, I saw an account of Fulton's death.

About the year 1840, I was on the railroad from Utica to Albany, with an aged gentleman in the cars, and the subject of steam power came up, when I informed him of my early acquaintance with steam power, &c. He was a well informed man, and, I think, had been a member of Assembly. He said he thought more credit had been given to Fulton than was his due ; that Col. John Stevens was more deserving than Fulton. I told him I never thought Fulton an inventor, but simply a busy collector of other people's inventions. "Well," replied the gentleman, "I always said so ; and he would never have succeeded had it not been for Daniel French." "What do you mean by Daniel French?" asked I. "Why, a Yankee," said he, "that Fulton kept locked up for six months, making drafts for him."

The name of Daniel French burst upon my ears for the first time for forty-nine years, and almost explained some mysteries.

In 1798, when in Philadelphia, I called in at the Museum, and saw an old bald-head eagle walking about the yard. The keeper, who, I think, was named Peal, told me the eagle was ninety-six years old ; that he was taken from the nest ninety-six years before, at Halifax, or Nova Scotia, and that he would have a new bill in four years. Four years after, I saw mention in a Philadelphia paper that the old eagle had got a new bill on. I had never seen any other account of the eagle, except in scripture,—of his renewing his age, like the eagle.

In or about 1794, Col. Noami Baldwin came from Boston to Pawtucket after machinery for a canal he was going to make, north from Boston. We made the patterns and cast his wheels, racks, &c., and he took them to Charlestown and finished the locks. I was there and saw the operation.

It being the first canal in the country, a good deal of curiosity was excited among the people.

About this time I saw the platform hay scales at Charlestown Neck, at what was called Page's Tavern. The plan of the scales was brought from Ireland by a Mr. Cox of Boston, who built the old Warren bridge, from Boston to Charlestown, and who was called to Ireland to build a bridge there. On his return to Boston, he brought a three-wheeled carriage, with a Shetland pony, for his son, and the plan of the platform scales, which has been the subject of so many patents in the United States.

We cast at Pawtucket the iron for the draw for the Cambridge bridge.

A Mr. Mills, who built the South Boston bridge, came to me for the machinery for the bridge. I fixed the patterns, and went to Raynham, got the castings, and carried them to Boston, for the first new bridge.

Jeptha Wilkinson, Junior, nephew of Jeremiah Wilkinson, invented a machine for making weavers' steel reeds by water power.

Gardner Wilkinson invented the rolling axletree in two parts, so useful on railroad curves, &c. He also made the morticing machine, and, I think, he and his brother made the pivot bridge used on canals.

About 1794 my father built a rolling and slitting mill at Pawtucket, on the gudgeon of the wheel of which I put my new screw machine in operation, which was on the principle of the guage or sliding lathe now in every workshop almost throughout the world; the perfection of which consists in that most faithful agent *gravity*, making the joint, and that almighty perfect number *three*, which is harmony itself. I was young when I learnt that principle. I had never seen my grandmother putting a chip under a three-legged milking stool; but she always had to put a chip under a four-legged table, to keep it steady. I cut screws of all dimensions by this machine, and did them perfectly.

I now made a model in miniature, and had thought of trying to procure a patent, but was afraid there might be something somewhere to interfere with me, already in use. So I started off to make inquiries. I went to New York, and found an Englishman in Greenwich street, on North river, named Barton, making clothiers' screws. He was welding an iron guide on the end of his tap, and forcing it through a socket with an iron bar, by hand, which was the old imperfection that troubled me always. I could hear of no other in New York. I had heard of one in Canaan, in Connecticut. I went on board a sloop, old Captain Wicks of Long Island, master, bound for Albany. In five days I landed at Fishkill, and went ashore, and walked some thirty miles to Canaan. I found screws made there by Forbes & Adams, by water power, but they welded on, and forced through

a socket in the old way. I heard of screws being made in Canaan, from Abram Burt of Taunton, Massachusetts. He called at Pawtucket, and looking at the old machine I was at work with by horse power, said he had been making screws at Canaan by water power; that he could "set his cutter in the socket, draw the gate, and then it lathered away like the devil," which I fully believed when I saw the machine. I returned to New York, and from there went to Philadelphia, and found no screws made there except after the same mode as in New York. I heard of screws being made on the Brandywine, but my informant assured me they were made the same way as his and Barton's, at New York. I now returned home, and in the year 1797 went on to Philadelphia, when Congress was in session, and made application for a patent; Mr. Joseph Tillinghast, then a Senator from Rhode Island, assisting me. On my return home, my father informed me that Jacob Perkins had been there, and wanted to see my machine, and that when he saw it he laughed out, and remarked that he could do his engraving on cast steel, for bank note plates, with that machine,—that he could make a hair stroke with that, for it would never tremble,—that he could put an oval under the end of the rut, and, with an eccentric, make all his oval figures. I suppose Mr. Perkins afterwards derived great benefit from the thing.

Whilst I was at work on Slater's machinery, the owners were unwilling that I should make a slide lathe on the principle of my screw machine, which was made for large turning; it was too heavy for cotton machinery. Mr. Slater said he had heard of one being made in England since he left, which would turn rollers. He wrote to Derbyshire, to his brother, John Slater, to come over, and bring a man who could build one. John came, and brought a Mr. John Blackburn, who made a slide lathe, which was on the principle of the old fluting machine, with the slide rest grooved in, in four edges, on two edged bars, forced in towards each other by wedges, in mortices, behind the tenon. They worked this lathe some few weeks, and then threw it out of doors, and afterwards did their work by the old hand tool, as before.

About that time my father, brothers, brothers-in-law William Wilkinson and Timothy Greene, and James, William and Christopher Rhodes, purchased a water power on the Quinnebaug river, Connecticut, at Pomfret, and commenced building a cotton factory. These owners consented that I might build a guage lathe like my large one. I then went to work, and made my patterns in Sylvanus Brown's shop, in Pawtucket. I left out the three friction rollers from under the rut, as for light work and slow motion I was willing to risk the friction.

About this time a company in Providence got a master machinist from England, named Samuel Ogden, to build a factory at Hope furnace. He was a man of great experience and good abilities. He advised me as a friend to abandon my new machine, for, said he, “you can *ne'er* do it, for we have tried it out and out at ‘ome, and given it up; and don’t you think we should have been doing it at ‘ome, if it could have been done?”

Mr. Pitkin of East Hartford had an Englishman named Warburton with him, building a factory. Warburton told me “*they* could never make our work in Europe,—that Watt & Bolton gave it to a man for a month’s work to finish a piston rod, with hand tools.”

When I had finished my patterns for the lathe, and was all ready to start next morning for the furnace in Foxborough, Sylvanus Brown took it into his head to put them into the stove and burn them up. I made others then, and got them cast, and made my lathe, and it worked to a charm. Mr. Richard Anthony, who was building a factory in Coventry, with his brother William, paid me ten dollars for the use of my lathe patterns, to cast after. And this is all I ever received for so valuable an invention.

Captain Benjamin Walcott, father of the Walcotts at York Mills, Oneida county, New York, and of Edward Walcott of Pawtucket, with Nathan J. Sweetland, put the “live centre” arbour, and the rack, in place of the screw for the feeder, to a lathe they built afterwards. But, on long experience, the screw is found best, and the two “dead centres” will make the truest work,—though they are not quite so convenient, perhaps, as the “live centre” arbour. But the two great principles of my machine can never be improved upon,—that is, *three bearings* to the rest, and *weight* to hold it down, where you may weigh your friction to an ounce.

The slide lathe has been sent to all parts of the world. A certain mechanic commenced business in this country, but after using one of my slide lathes a while, he bought one, and returned to England with it; remarking, that with that lathe in England, he could do better than at any business he could get into in this country.

It was unfortunate for me patenting my machine when the machine making and manufacturing business in this country was only in its infancy. The patent would run out before it could be brought into very extensive use. It certainly did run out without my deriving that benefit from the invention I was so justly entitled to. One solitary ten dollar note is surely but small recompense for an improvement that is worth all the other tools in use in any workshop in the world, for finishing brass and iron work.

The weighted slide, the joint made by gravity, applies to planing, turning, and boring of metals of every kind, and every way, as it needs no

watching, and, instead of wearing *out* of repair, it is always wearing *into* repair.

I was always too much engaged in various business to look after and make profit out of my inventions. Other people, I hope, gained something by them.

We built machinery to go to almost every part of the country,—to Pomfret and Killingly, Connecticut; to Hartford, Vermont; to Waltham, Norton, Raynham, Plymouth, Halifax, Plympton, Middleboro', and other places in Massachusetts; for Wall & Wells, Trenton, New Jersey; for Union & Gray, on the Patapsco; for the Warren factories, on the Gunpowder, near Baltimore; to Tarboro' and Martinburgh, North Carolina; to two factories in Georgia; to Louisiana; to Pittsburgh; to Delaware; to Virginia, and other places. Indeed, Pawtucket was doing something for almost every part of the Union, and I had my hands too full of business, and was laboring too much for the *general prosperity*, to take proper care of the details, perhaps, and the advancement of my own individual interests.

In 1829 we all broke down; and although I was sixty years of age, and in very bad health, I thought I would move away, and see if I could not my earn my own living. I moved with my family to Cohoes Falls, in the State of New York, and there fixed my new home. I have since recovered my health wonderfully, and, at this moment, being about seventy-six years old, I am hearty and well—enjoy my food as well as any one, and can bear a good deal of fatigue and exposure. Few men of my age enjoy their faculties and health better than I do. Have I not much to be thankful for? I have, and am most sincerely thankful to a merciful God for the many and great blessings.

The prospects at Cohoes were flattering for a time. But nullification, free trade, and such abominations, killed the new village just born. Europeans who were applying for water power at Cohoes at this time, went away, saying, now we were going to have free trade; they could do our work cheaper at "ome" than they could in this country, and they would build their factories there.

We were compelled now to get our living where we could,—to go abroad, if we could not get work at home. I went to work on the Delaware and Raritan Canal, in New Jersey; then on the St. Lawrence improvements, in Canada; then to Ohio, on the Sandy and Beaver Canal; then to the new Wire bridge, on the Ottawa river, at Bytown, Canada, and Virginia. Wherever I could find anything to do, I went; and it is wonderful how I endured exposure to wet and cold as I did.

In 1835-6, while engaged on the St. Lawrence river, I met a gentleman at Kingston, who advised me to go back of the Rideau lake, to get what I wanted, about seventy miles north of Kingston, to a village named Perth, which was given to the officers and soldiers who served in the late war with the United States. At the hotel at Perth, the landlord showed me a silver clasp which was taken from the leg of a large eagle which was shot in the village. The plate, or clasp, was from some place in Connecticut; I do not remember the town, nor the person's name; but directed to Henry Clay. It was after the war, and the bearer of the express probably thought he might safely take a circuitous route through the British provinces. But these Canadians didn't like the name of Henry Clay; his policy had too anti-British a tendency to suit them; so they took the poor express eagle as a spy, I suppose, and refused to sell the clasp at any price. Perhaps they wanted to have the story to tell, that our American eagle had been struck to them, at least.

These are the recollections of an old man, and you will please take them for what they are worth. If they are worth anything to any one, I shall be glad. To yourself, I believe they will be valuable, and be the means of recalling many pleasant incidents of olden times, and of an old friend.

DAVID WILKINSON.

Cohoes, Albany County, N. Y.,

December 1, 1846.

Rev. GEORGE TAFT, Pawtucket, R. I.

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### HISTORY OF PAWTUCKET BRIDGES.

The following interesting history of the bridges built over the Pawtucket river, was presented by the Presidents of Firewards, at the annual meeting of the District of Pawtucket, held on April 4th, 1864:

The Presidents of Firewards take this opportunity to congratulate the citizens of the District upon being relieved from all liabilities assumed by them more than six years ago, toward the erection of the stone bridge across the river in this village. It will be remembered by most of you, that bonds to the amount of twelve thousand dollars were issued by the District, the payment of which was assumed and guaranteed by the State of Rhode Island. The last of these bonds for two thousand dollars fell due on the first day of July last, and was paid, thereby relieving the District from any further liabilities.

As the building of the present stone bridge, of such a substantial and permanent character, was an event of the greatest importance to the business and travel of our village, it has been suggested that a brief and comprehensive sketch or history of the various bridges across the river at this place, running back nearly or quite one hundred and fifty years, might prove interesting to the present inhabitants, and find a place on the records of the District, which can be referred to in years to come.

From an examination of the State records of Rhode Island and Massachusetts, it has been ascertained that up to the year 1746, the bridges were built and kept in repair by the two States jointly. In 1712 a joint committee was appointed by the two States, to make a thorough examination of the bridge then standing, and if in their judgment they deemed it necessary, they were authorized and empowered to destroy the old bridge and build a new one. At that time the bridge crossed the river over the "Fishing Rock," (so called,) a little south of the present locality, and the road passed up through the coal yard to Main street. The bridge and the roads connected with it at that time constituted a part of the great thoroughfare for travel from Boston, through the State of Rhode Island, to New York.

In 1746 the General Assembly of Rhode Island appointed a committee to run a new boundary line between this State and Massachusetts, and from that time up to the present, Massachusetts has refused to appropriate any money towards said bridge, or to exercise any ownership or control over it.

From 1712 to 1840, Rhode Island, as appears by the records of the General Assembly, took action and passed votes and resolutions in more than eighty instances, in relation to the Pawtucket Bridge.

The records of the town of North Providence also show various resolutions and votes—the appointment of committees, and the appropriation of money for repairs and toward the erection of the bridge.

On the 15th day of February, 1807, about two-thirds of the west end of the bridge was swept away by what is called the "Great Freshet." The General Assembly of Rhode Island took immediate action in the matter, and appointed Abraham Wilkinson, who was the Representative from North Providence at the time, a committee to rebuild the bridge, and an appropriation was made for that purpose.

In 1817 the bridge was rebuilt, (under the direction of John W. Dexter, Surveyor of Highways for North Providence,) principally by an appropriation from the town of North Providence.

In 1832 the bridge was again rebuilt, under the supervision and direction of Messrs. Clark Sayles and Isaac Ellis, at an expense of about sixteen

hundred dollars—six hundred of which was an appropriation from the town of North Providence, and the balance of one thousand dollars, by subscription made by the inhabitants on both sides of the river.

In 1839, the bridge needing repairs, much dissatisfaction was expressed by the tax-payers of North Providence at being further taxed, believing that the bridge belonged to the State of Rhode Island, and that the State should bear the expense. Messrs. Stephen Randall, Jr., and Edward S. Wilkinson, who were the members of the General Assembly from North Providence, commenced an examination of the records of the General Assembly, to ascertain who rightfully should maintain the bridge. Commencing back nearly or quite one hundred and fifty years, and making a careful and minute examination up to the year 1839, they found the evidence so strong, that at the January session of the General Assembly in 1840, Mr. Wilkinson introduced a resolution into that body, appointing a committee “to ascertain who is bound to keep the bridge over Pawtucket Falls in repair.” Messrs. Randolph of Newport, Mathewson of Scituate, E. R. Potter of South Kingstown, Spencer of Warwick, and Bosworth of Warren were that committee. Subsequently, William A. Robinson of South Kingstown was appointed in the place of E. R. Potter.

The committee of the General Assembly held several meetings, and the evidence that had been collected by Messrs. Randall and Wilkinson was laid before them. After hearing all the evidence, the committee came to the unanimous conclusion that the bridge was State property, and that it was incumbent on the State to maintain and keep it in repair. In accordance with that decision, they submitted their report to the May session of the General Assembly, with a recommendation that the Providence and Pawtucket Turnpike (which then had become State property) be extended through Pleasant and Main streets in the village of Pawtucket to the Massachusetts line, including the Pawtucket Bridge. In accordance with that report, at that same session the following act was passed :

*“Be it enacted by the General Assembly as follows:*

“That said road be, and the same is hereby extended as the road is now established from the present northern termination thereof, to the Massachusetts line, including the bridge at Pawtucket Falls, in the township of North Providence and in the village of Pawtucket; and the agent of said turnpike for the State, is hereby directed to take charge of said bridge and additional road, and keep the same in proper repair. And said agent is also hereby required to make an annual report to the General Assembly at its January session.”

At a special session of the General Assembly in March, 1842, the following resolutions were introduced by Mr. Edward S. Wilkinson, and adopted :

“*Resolved*, That Stephen Randall, Jr., Gideon L. Spencer and Edward S. Wilkinson be authorized to erect a substantial wood bridge over the falls at Pawtucket, provided the expense thereof does not exceed the sum of three thousand dollars.

“*Resolved*, That the agent of the State having charge of the Pawtucket Turnpike Road, be directed (after having paid for the necessary repairs of said road) to retain in his hands the balance of the moneys that may be collected on the said turnpike, from and after the 1st day of April, 1842, for the purpose of paying the expense of erecting the aforesaid bridge ; and to pay over the aforesaid amount of three thousand dollars to the order of the Building Committee, in such sums and at such times as they may require.”

The committee at once entered into a contract with Mr. Albert Cottrell of Newport, and a new bridge was built in the summer of 1843 for \$3000.

Complaints being made to the General Assembly at their January session, 1857, that the bridge was very much out of repair, and even dangerous for travel, they appointed a committee, consisting of Jonathan C. Kenyon of North Providence, Stephen N. Mason of Smithfield, Nathaniel Spaulding of Smithfield, James C. Moulton of Cumberland, and Obadiah Brown of North Providence, to examine Pawtucket Bridge, and decide whether the present bridge could be repaired, or whether a new bridge would have to be erected.

The town of North Providence, at their April town meeting of the same year, appointed a committee, consisting of John H. Weeden, Gideon L. Spencer, Andrew R. Slade, Enoch Brown and Edward S. Wilkinson, to meet and confer with the State committee in regard to the bridge. Early that season the State committee met at Pawtucket; the town committee met at the same time, and a thorough examination of the bridge was made. The State committee came to the unanimous conclusion that it was absolutely necessary to erect a new bridge, and that it ought to be done immediately. Some estimates were made of the cost of a new bridge, and it was found that to build a bridge of wood, would cost five or six thousand dollars—to erect a stone bridge would incur an expense of twelve or fifteen thousand dollars. The State committee raised the objection that the constitution prohibited the General Assembly from creating a debt exceeding the sum of fifty thousand dollars, and that the debt of the State already

amounted to about that sum. The State committee, with the constitutional objection, could not see their way clear to recommend the erection of a bridge by the State, and decided to report the facts.

At this stage of the proceedings, Mr. Edward S. Wilkinson, one of the town committee, stated that he had foreseen the constitutional objection, and had been maturing in his own mind some plan to overcome the difficulty. He then made the proposition,—that the General Assembly should authorize the District of Pawtucket to issue its bonds for the purpose of raising funds to build a stone bridge. At the same time, the General Assembly should pledge the net amount of tolls, collected from the Providence and Pawtucket Turnpike, for the payment of principal and interest of said bonds. He estimated that a stone bridge could be erected for about twelve thousand dollars. From a careful examination of the receipts of the turnpike, the last ten years, a basis could be arrived at to fix the income for the next few years. Upon that basis he estimated that a small annual appropriation from the State treasury, together with the annual income from the road, two thousand dollars of the principal and the interest on said bonds would be paid each year, and that in the course of six years the whole amount of bonds would be liquidated. This plan was favorably received, and at the request of the committee he drew up an act, embracing the main features as proposed, and also a statement containing an estimate of the receipts of tolls for the next six years, and also a statement of the estimated amount that would annually be required to be paid from the State treasury.

The State committee made their report at the next session, recommending the erection of a stone bridge, which report was accepted and adopted. Subsequently the following act was passed :

“AN ACT in relation to Pawtucket Bridge.

“*It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:*

“Section 1. Lewis Fairbrother, Enoch Brown and Daniel Wilkinson are hereby appointed commissioners to receive proposals for the erection of a stone bridge across the Pawtucket river, at the east end of the State turnpike, and to superintend the erection of the same, provided its total cost shall not exceed the sum of twelve thousand dollars.

“Sec. 2. The ‘District of Pawtucket’ are hereby authorized and empowered, at any regular meeting of said District, to issue bonds not exceeding the sum of twelve thousand dollars, bearing interest at the rate of six per cent. per annum, payable semi-annually. The proceeds of said bonds are to be used by the commissioners to defray the costs of the erection of the aforesaid bridge.

"Sec. 3. The net amount of tolls collected from the State Turnpike are hereby appropriated, together with such other sum as may be found necessary, to be paid from the State treasury, for the purpose of liquidating the interest on the aforesaid bonds, and two thousand dollars of the principal of said bonds annually until the whole are discharged.

"Sec. 4. The agent of the State Turnpike is hereby directed to retain in his hands the net amount of tolls collected from said turnpike, and from the same to pay the interest on the aforesaid bonds, and draw on the General Treasurer for such amount as may be necessary to annually discharge the amount to be paid as specified in the preceding section."

The commissioners under the act at once secured the services of Samuel B. Cushing, Esq., of Providence, as engineer, to draft a plan, with specifications, for a stone bridge. Proposals were advertised for, and when opened, the commissioners found that such a bridge as was designed and needed, could not be built for the amount appropriated by the State. Fifteen thousand dollars would be required. The District of Pawtucket authorized their treasurer to issue bonds to the amount of twelve thousand dollars—two thousand dollars of which were to mature annually. The bonds were issued and placed in the hands of the commissioners. Application was made to the towns of North Providence and Pawtucket to contribute the three thousand dollars wanted to make up the fifteen thousand dollars. By votes in special town meetings, those two towns contributed the sum of fifteen hundred dollars each. With the fifteen thousand dollars thus secured, the commissioners at once entered into a contract with Mr. Luther Kinsley of Fall River to build the bridge, and at the same time engaged Samuel B. Cushing, Esq., as engineer, to superintend the work.

The heavy rains of that summer rendered it hazardous to commence the work that season, and the commissioners concluded to delay the work till the following year. During the fall and winter of 1857 the stone was being quarried and put in shape. All due preparations being made, on the 6th day of July, 1858, travel was suspended on the old bridge, and its demolition commenced. From that day the work was vigorously prosecuted, and the present stone bridge, built complete in all its parts, was opened for travel on the 4th day of November, 1858. The event was one of signal satisfaction to all of our citizens, and the day was given up to public rejoicings. The bridge is an ornament to our village. Its beauty and symmetry have been the admiration of all who have seen it, reflecting the highest credit upon Mr. Cushing, the engineer, and Mr. Kinsley, the builder. It will stand long after all those who now travel over it, have passed into the spirit-land. Time, only, can work its decay.

The foregoing brief history discloses the fact, that to our fellow-citizen, Mr. Edward S. Wilkinson, this community are in a very great degree indebted for the present noble structure, and we take pleasure in thus putting upon record the merit that is due him.

Respectfully submitted.

G. A. MUMFORD,  
Secretary Presidents of Firewards.

Pawtucket, April 4, 1864.

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NOTE.—In the history of the newspapers of North Providence, on page 38 of the foregoing address, it should have been mentioned that Shubael Kinnicutt, Esq., was associated with Mr. Sherman in the original establishment of the Gazette in 1838. In January, 1864, Mr. Ansel D. Nickerson purchased an interest in the establishment, and became associated in the publication of the Gazette and Chronicle. M. G.

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